WRESTLING SUPERSTARS

WINTER 1995

PAUL E.'s SECRET PLOT:
FORCE THE STEINERS TO WRESTLE—EACH OTHER!

WRESTLING SUPERSTARS

Jealousy Cuts Deep:

WHY DIESEL'S SUCCESS EATS RAZOR RAMON ALIVE!

SUPERSTAR DREAM MATCH:
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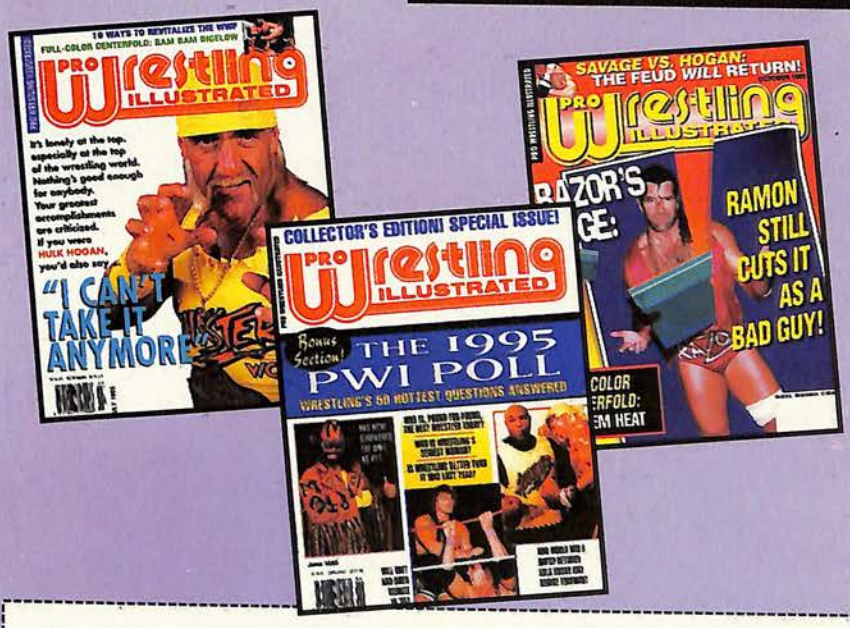

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FAN FORUM

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BRUISER BOOSTER

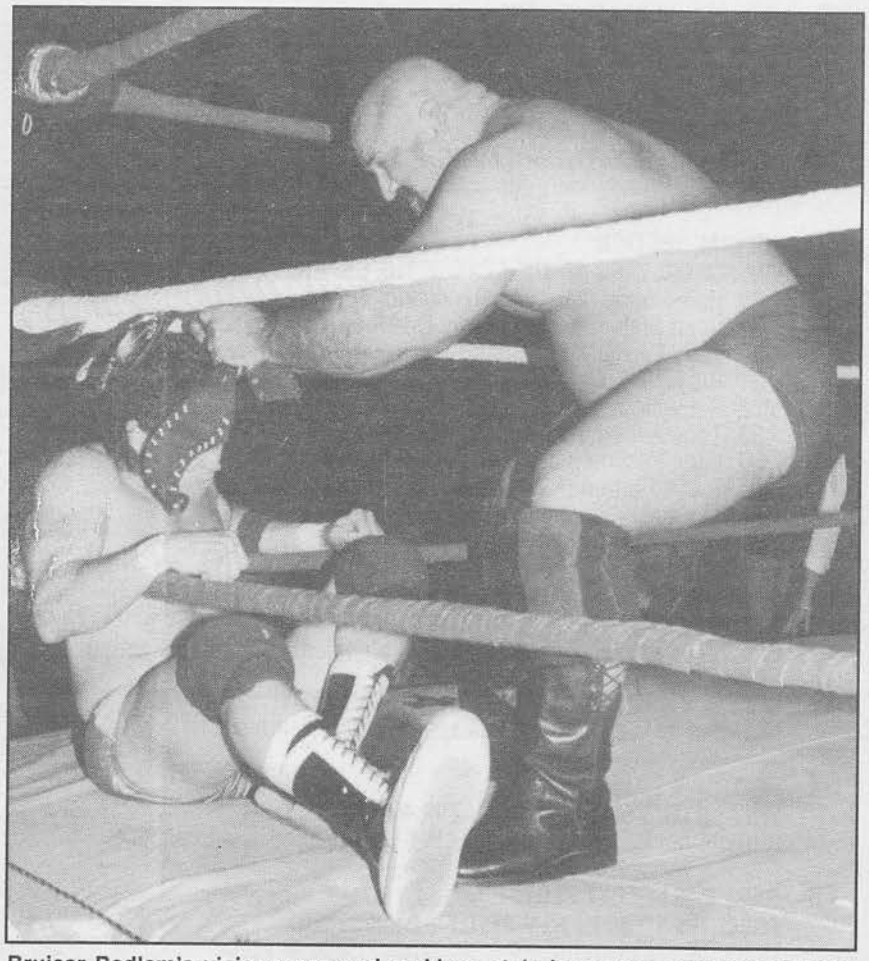
Your article on Bruiser Bedlam was excellent ("Even When You Beat Bruiser Bedlam—You Lose!" Fall 1995). It's about time he starts getting recognized. He is as strong and as tough as they come. To me, he is what a wrestler should look and fight like. I saw him beat up Cactus Jack in both Cleveland and Kentucky. Jim Cornette was Bedlam's manager at that time. I think that Bruiser's time in the WWF or WCW is coming soon. That is, if Japan doesn't grab him first.

PETER SELKIRK
Cleveland, OH

THE OLD WITH THE NEW

There has been a lot of talk about the WWF and all the wrestlers who are part of its "New Generation." I think it is a good idea for the WWF to hype these young wrestlers, because by doing so, the fans are introduced to new talent, which is something the sport always needs. At the same time, it doesn't hurt to maintain a few established names. There are two established wrestlers I feel would be great in the WWF right now: "All-American" Ron Simmons and The Ultimate Warrior.

Ron Simmons would be a tremendous asset to the WWF, especially since he is a power-oriented wrestler. A match between Simmons and WWF World champion Diesel would



Bruiser Bedlam's viciousness and reckless style have won over reader Peter Selkirk, who thinks the WWF or WCW should sign this brutal brawler pronto.

Ron Simmons (shown pressing ECW's Mikey Whipwreck) would fit in well in the WWF right now, according to reader Bruce Gray. He'd like to see Simmons lock up with Diesel.

be awesome, to say the least. The Ultimate Warrior's return to the WWF would put a lot of people in the seats. Vince McMahon should get on his hands and knees and beg for the Warrior's return. It would be real nice for the WWF to have the real Warrior, while WCW has a pathetic copycat in The Renegade.

BRUCE GRAY
Orlando, FL

DIFFERENT SIDES OF SID

What parent in his or her right mind would allow his child to accept "Psycho" Sid Vicious as a role model ("The Soft Side Of 'Psycho' Sid," Fall 1995)? Sid has a history of snapping for no reason. Who is to say that he wouldn't do that in front of a kid? Sid has snapped in front of people he's known for a lot longer than his neighbor's kid. If I were Seth Patell's parent, I would be afraid that he would go into one of his tirades while Seth was around.

Maybe for some reason this kid does get along with Sid on a different level than everyone else. Maybe this kid is the one person who actually understands Sid and can be near him without fear of being attacked. If I was the parent, though, I'd still worry.

ANNE JERGENS
Shreveport, LA

Until recently, I never would have believed that "Psycho" Sid Vicious was anything but vicious, but after reading "The Soft Side Of 'Psycho' Sid," I now believe that there may be a good side to everybody, including hardened rule-breakers. Sid seemed to be genuinely enjoying himself in all of the photos featuring him and his neighbor Seth Patell. It just proved to me that he is like any other human being. He experiences all kinds of emotions, too.

The article made me think back over Sid's career and all of his past "psychotic" episodes. Before, I just wrote him off as a crazed madman because of his wild behavior. Upon reflection, I'm thinking that maybe the public has misjudged him all these years. Maybe he isn't so "Psycho" after all.

GLEN BYRON
Tampa, FL

(Continued on page 72)

Sid Vicious made young Seth Patell's dream come true when he allowed the youngster to walk to the ring with him for several USWA matches in 1995. Our readers disagree as to whether "Psycho" Sid is a good role model.

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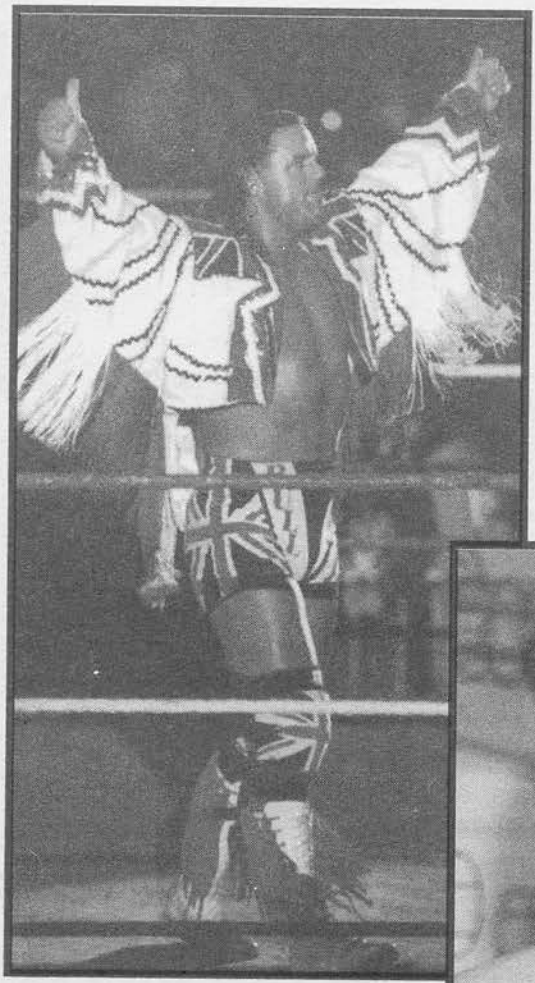
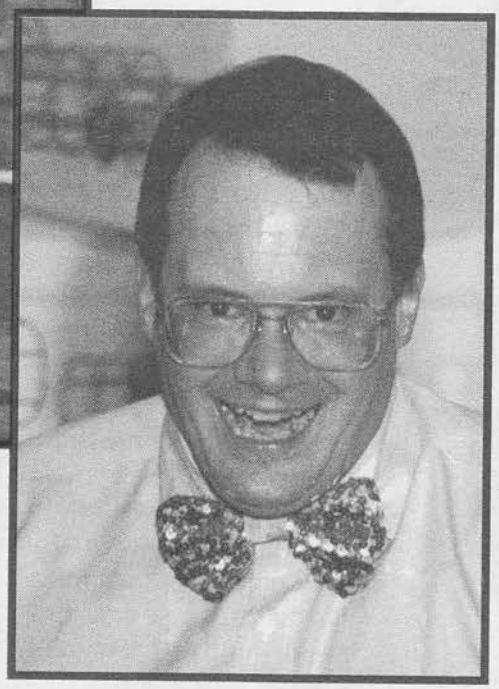
SUPERSTAR GRAPEVINE

WHAT IS UP with **Davey Boy Smith**? That was the question on the minds of thousands of WWF fans this past August after they witnessed the "British Bulldog's" vicious and unprovoked attack on World champion **Diesel** during a tag team match against **Men on a Mission**.





Now a rulebreaker, Davey Boy Smith (above) is getting plenty of advice from manager Jim Cornette (right). But was it Owen Hart who poisoned the "British Bulldog's" mind?

Was it frustration? Was he sick of the losses he and **Lex Luger** suffered to WWF tag team champs **Owen Hart** and **Yokozuna**? According to him, it was neither.

"It's the only way I could get a World title shot," Smith spat. "I asked Diesel, and I never got any response. And before he was champion, I had no shot, because **Bret Hart** was champion!"

WRESTLING SUPERSTARS contacted several WWF promoters and couldn't find one who could corroborate Smith's last comment. In fact, none could remember Smith making any kind of formal request for a title shot in at least the last six months. "I've always heard that he was happy teaming with Lex," said one. "He used to tell people that if they got enough title shots, they'd eventually get the belts. This thing with him attacking Diesel just came out of nowhere."

Some feel it was Owen who was behind the "Bulldog's" attitude change. It might not have been a coincidence that Smith joined Owen in **Jim Cornette's** stable as soon as he turned his back on the fans. If you remember, Owen was one of the reasons Smith returned to the WWF last summer. Davey Boy saved Bret from a postmatch attack by Owen and Jim Neidhart at SummerSlam '94 and went on to team with Bret in several matches against Owen and Neidhart. But since the Bret-Owen feud has cooled off, Bret hasn't been seen with his brother-in-law too often.

"It wouldn't surprise me if Owen poisoned Davey Boy's mind," said one WWF fan favorite. "He could have seen all the success Owen was having lately and figured maybe it was a good idea to join his side. That and big money from Cornette could be tough to turn down."

Owen simply laughed when asked about this scenario and said, "Let's just say I'm very proud of Davey Boy and what he did!"

***

News that **Sabu** had signed with WCW for at least a few matches,

(Continued on page 74)

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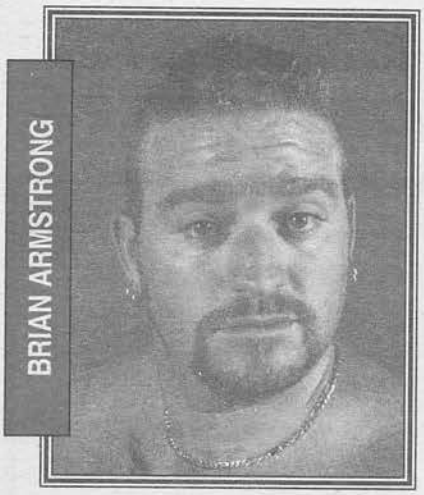
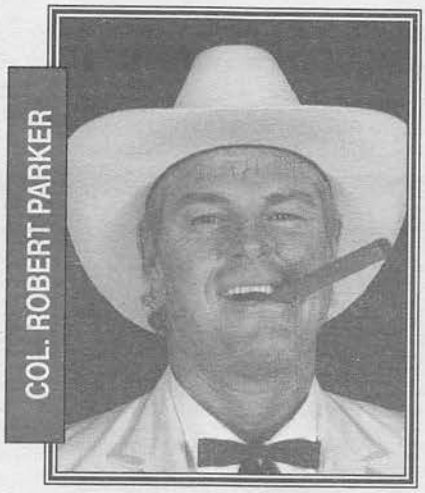
SUPERSTAR QUOTEBOOK

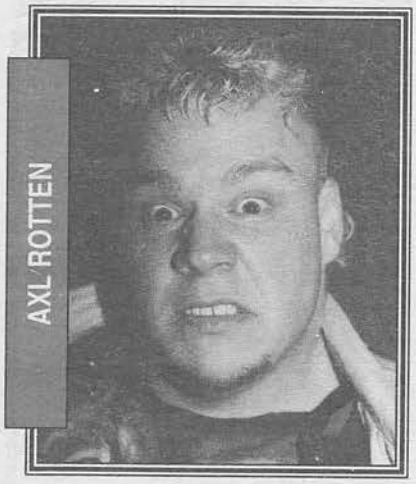


"The Road Dog is here, people. 'Double-J' is taking a break right now, but I'm still here. I'm not going anywhere. Maybe I'm not in the WWF anymore, but I'm doin' just fine in Smoky Mountain. Anybody who wants a piece of me knows where to find me. I'll take on Jim Cornette and his gang of fools and turn 'em into roadkill, if you know what I mean. Maybe when Jeff Jarrett sees how great I'm doin', he'll come on back and join me. I think he could be my roadie someday!"

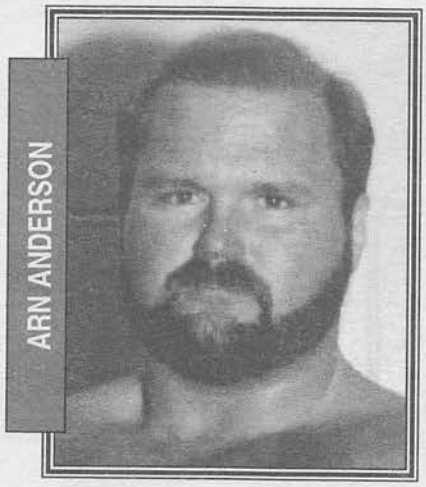


"You know, folks, the good Colonel has had some lovely ladies by his side over the years. Yes, indeed, I am quite the ladies' man. I'm telling y'all the truth when I say I was just lookin' to have some fun with that Sherri Martel when I kissed her. I see now it was a mistake, because that filly follows me everywhere, tryin' to rip my clothes off and have at me. I had to hire me some security to keep her away. That woman oughta be committed to an institution!"

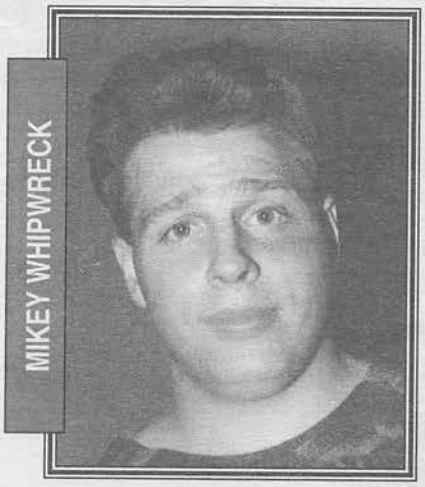
"I'm sure all of you brilliant fans out there have enjoyed watching that beast Tommy Dreamer piledrive me. That piece of trash doesn't know how to treat a beautiful woman like me. No, he'd rather hang out with a she devil like Luna Vachon. He's got great taste in women. Yeah, right. Well, Dreamer and Pit Bulls, you guys enjoy having Luna on your side, because I got Raven and I got Steve Richards, and they got the ECW tag team belts. That's all that matters!"



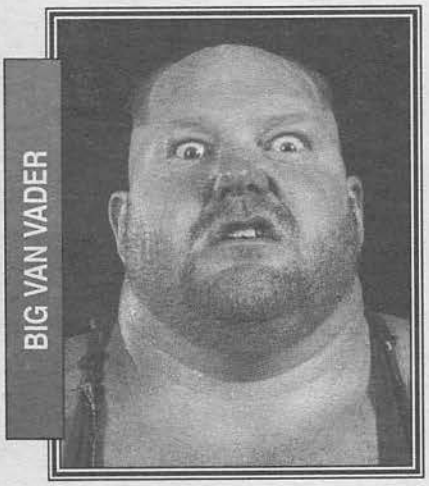
"It's time everyone took a really good look at the new Axl Rotten. I already proved many, many times that I can be the meanest you-know-what in the world. Just ask my brother Ian. He's lucky he can still walk after what I did to him with my baseball bat. What I want to show people now is how good a *technical* wrestler I am. I've already given a lot of the bad dudes in the USWA lessons in wrestling. Soon everyone will realize Axl Rotten is not just a brawler!"



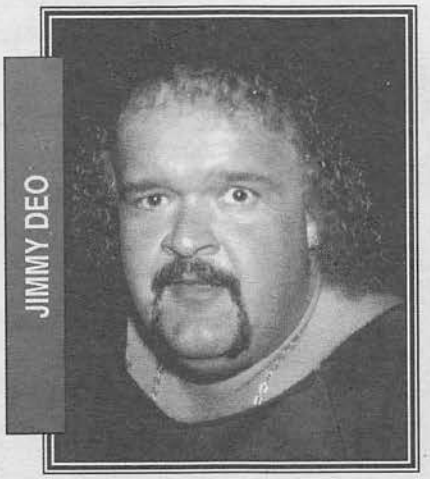
"I've gotta be honest. I never thought after all these years that me and the so-called great Ric Flair would come to blows. Never in my worst nightmare. We've always found ways to work out our problems. But this time he went too far. I'm tired of doing his dirty work for him. I'm sick of bailin' him out when things get tough. Arn Anderson has always been his own man, and it's time for Ric Flair to find out how tough I am. That friendship is dead and buried!"



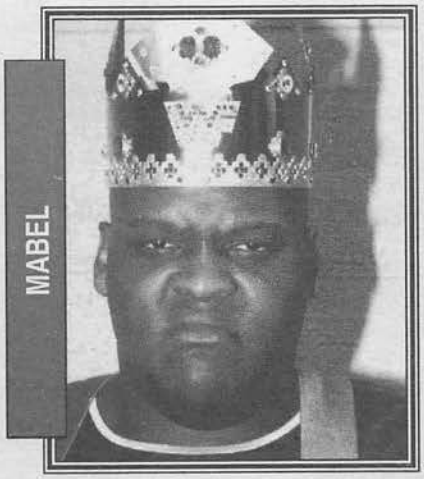
"No matter where I go, fans tell me how sorry they feel for me, because I'm always getting beat up by The Sandman or 2 Cold Scorpio or someone. They see Sandman beating me with his cane and say, 'Poor Mikey.' Well, I'm tired of people feeling sorry for me. I can take my lumps as well as anybody in ECW. I beat Sandman in a non-title match, and next time I'll take his ECW belt. I'll keep trying until I get it. Wish me luck, but don't pity me. I'm not a child."



"Vader is an angry man these days, and when Vader is angry, he is dangerous. I don't like it when people say I sold out to Hulk Hogan. Vader does what he wants to do. If the fans want to cheer me, then let them cheer. I didn't ask Hulk Hogan to be my friend. We just happen to have a few of the same enemies, like the Dungeon of Doom, and we're fighting them all together. Hogan doesn't know if he can trust me. Well, let me tell you, Hogan: I don't know, either!"

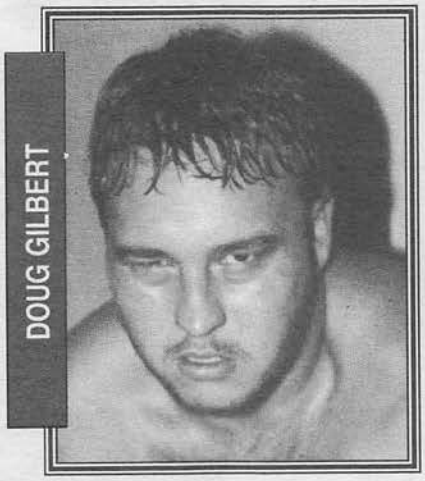


"Assault and Battery. Jimmy Deo and Maxx Crimson. Remember those names, because you're going to be hearing them a lot soon. Me and my partner are the Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling tag team champions. I hear The Heavenly Bodies tellin' everyone about how they won the Smoky Mountain and USWA tag belts. So what! We beat those guys twice this summer. If they want another piece of us, we'd be glad to put our belts up against any belts they got!"

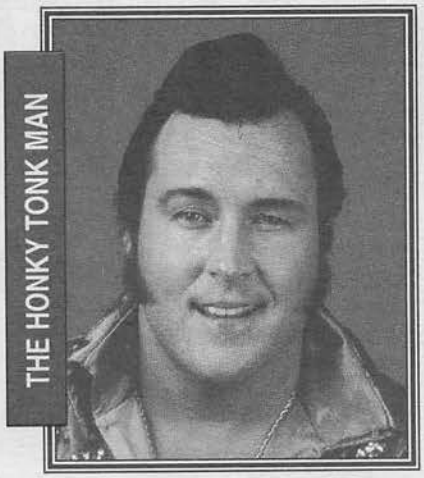


"As the ruler of all you pathetic fans out there, I am getting very, very angry. Some of you have not accepted me as your king! I expect you to bow down when you're in the presence of King Mabel and Sir Mo. All you are my servants. You should feel honored that I let you see me wrestle and beat every lowlife who stands in my way. Soon Diesel and Shawn Michaels will be bowing at my feet and calling me king. I'll teach 'em respect. King Mabel rules the world!"

"What's it gonna take for me and 'Dirty' Dick Slater to get some respect. We're the WCW World tag champs, and we get treated like pond scum. I'm sick of hearin' about them Nasty Boys and Harlem Heat. We're the best in the world. Sometimes we'll just walk in a bar and look for the toughest guys there and challenge them to a fight. That's what we do on our nights off. It's great fun and good practice for matches against Harlem Heat. Them guys ain't so tough!"



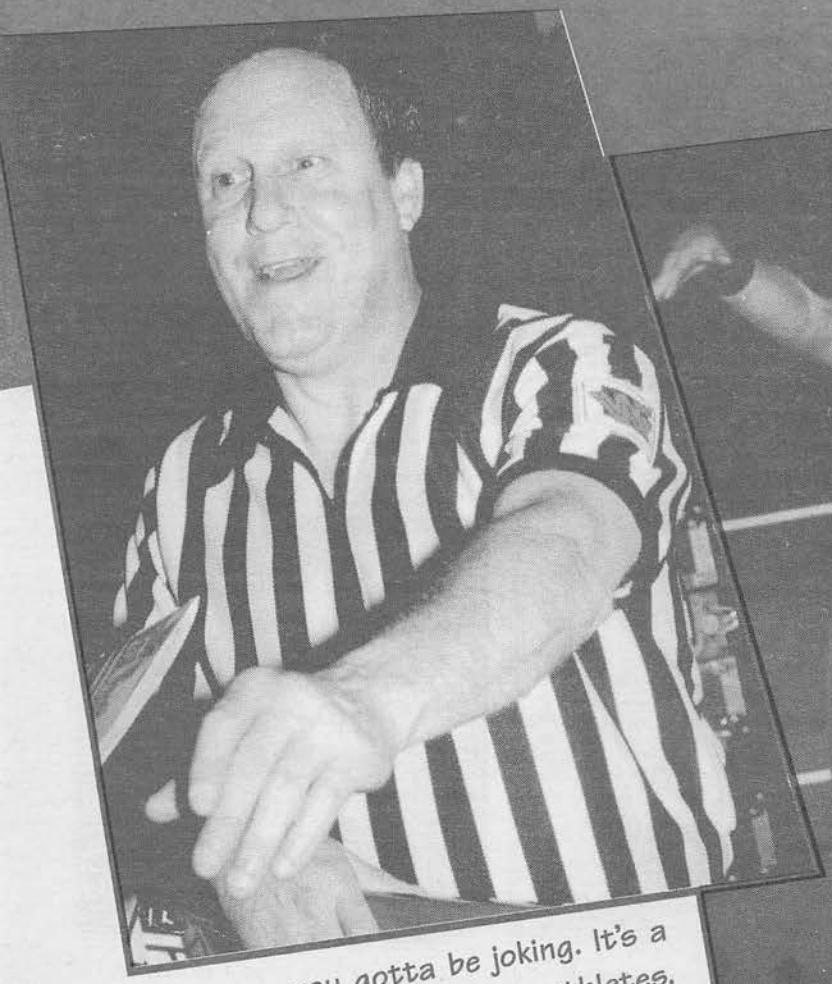
"I've done some nasty things in my life, but like everyone else in my family, I don't make apologies for what I've done in the ring. I've always said that the USWA is one of the toughest promotions in the world, even though I've heard a lot of boos here. I won't tolerate anyone from Smoky Mountain coming here and insulting the wrestlers in the USWA. I'll defend this promotion against Buddy Landell or whoever tries to invade Memphis as long as I'm here."



"I shouldn't have taken it so easy on The Ultimate Warrior in that match we had in Vegas. I felt sorry for him. There he was, tryin' to make a comeback, and he had to do it in front of all those fans who came just hopin' The Honky Tonk Man would give them a free concert. Well, I couldn't do it because that guy cheated during the match and beat me. That put me in a bad mood. Plus he broke my guitar. Talk about a lack of class. He hasn't seen the last of me!"

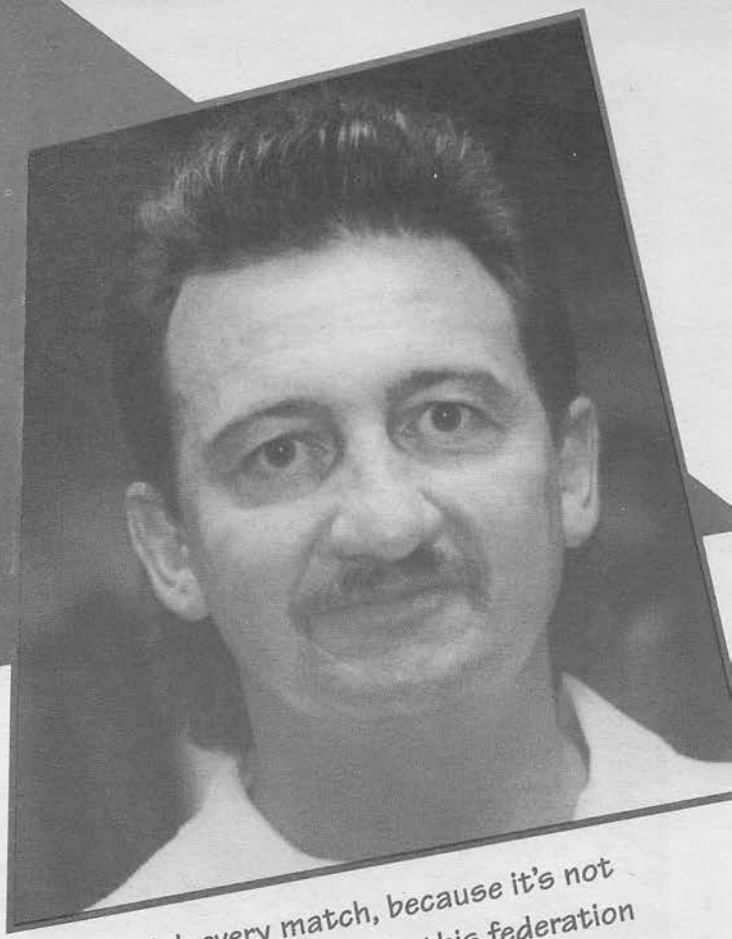
FRISK 'EM!

REFEREES ARE FORGETTING THEIR MOST IMPORTANT JOB!

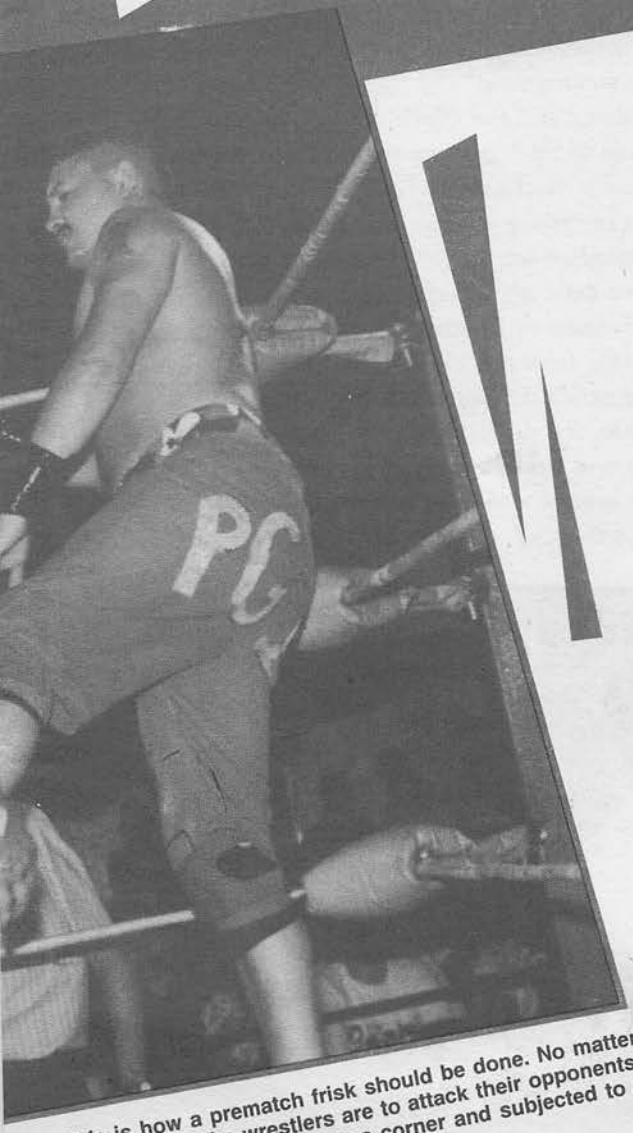


"Come on, you gotta be joking. It's a waste of time to frisk the athletes. We never find anything!"
—WWF referee Earl Hebner

A 10-SECOND CHECK DOESN'T SOUND LIKE SUCH A BIG DEAL, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT ACCOMPLISHES SO MUCH, BUT WRESTLING'S OUNCE OF PREVENTION HAS BEEN FORGOTTEN, AND RULEBREAKERS ARE READYING FOR AN ONSLAUGHT



"I don't frisk every match, because it's not necessary. Every wrestler in this federation knows that this could be the match I frisk, so they don't bother taking any chances."
—WCW referee Randy Anderson



This is how a prematch frisk should be done. No matter how anxious the wrestlers are to attack their opponents, they should be backed into a corner and subjected to a quick but thorough check.

By Dave Rosenbaum

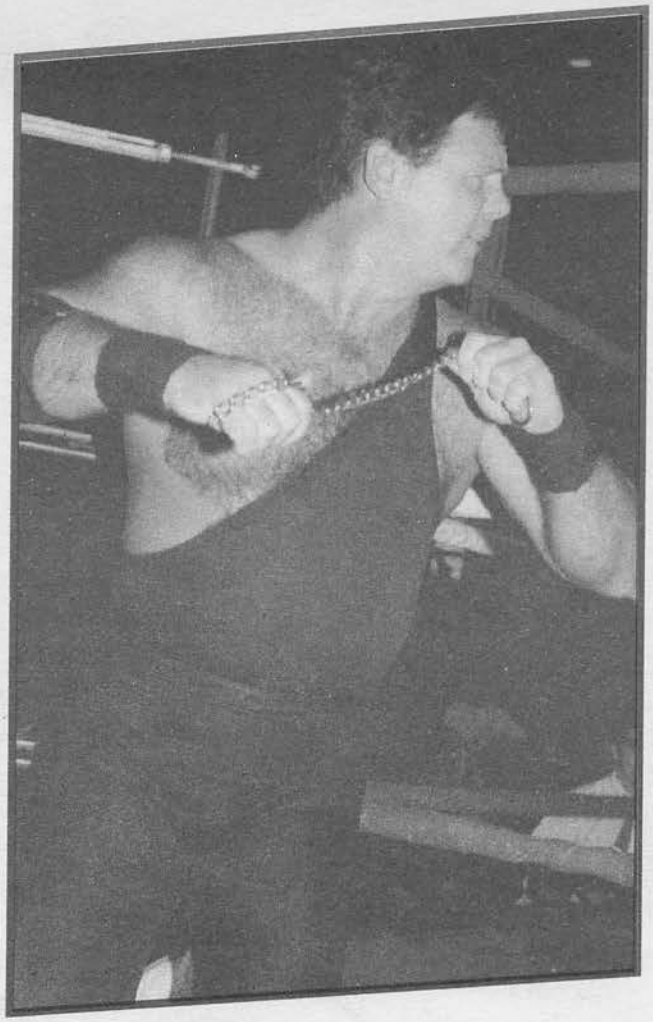
A frequent business traveler, minutes away from missing an important flight, does an O.J. Simpson-type run through a busy airport. With sweat dripping from his forehead and the handle of an overstuffed carry-on bag digging into the skin of his hand, he approaches the security checkpoint and prepares to place his luggage into the X-ray machine.

"That won't be necessary, sir," an attendant says. "We're not doing that anymore."

The traveler breathes a sigh of relief and continues on his way. But he's only a few feet past the former checkpoint when curiosity gets the best of him.

"Why not?" he asks the attendant.

"Oh, it was a waste of time. We never found anything anyway."



It's no secret that Jerry Lawler likes using chains and likes hiding chains in his trunks. Frisking someone as devious as "The King" is crucial. It's a wonder some of his opponents haven't demanded it be done more regularly.

THE SCENARIO JUST described never actually happened, thank goodness. National security would be seriously jeopardized if the Federal Aviation Authority suddenly decided to take down the security checkpoints that have drastically reduced the number of bombings, hijackings, and terrorist acts on airplanes. Logic says the reason bombs and guns are rarely found at security checkpoints is because would-be criminals know they'd have a hard time getting past the trained guards.

On a far less dangerous scale, compare this situation to one that exists in professional wrestling right now. In the modern age, wrestlers rarely bring foreign objects into the ring; usually, objects are handed to them by a manager or another wrestler who just happens to show up at ringside. Unfortunately, there's very little referees can do about that if they don't see it.

But federations used to solve the problem of wrestlers carrying excessive baggage by making it mandatory for referees to check the athletes prior to the opening bell. For decades, wrestlers didn't bother to try to circumvent the foreign object rule because they knew they'd get caught.

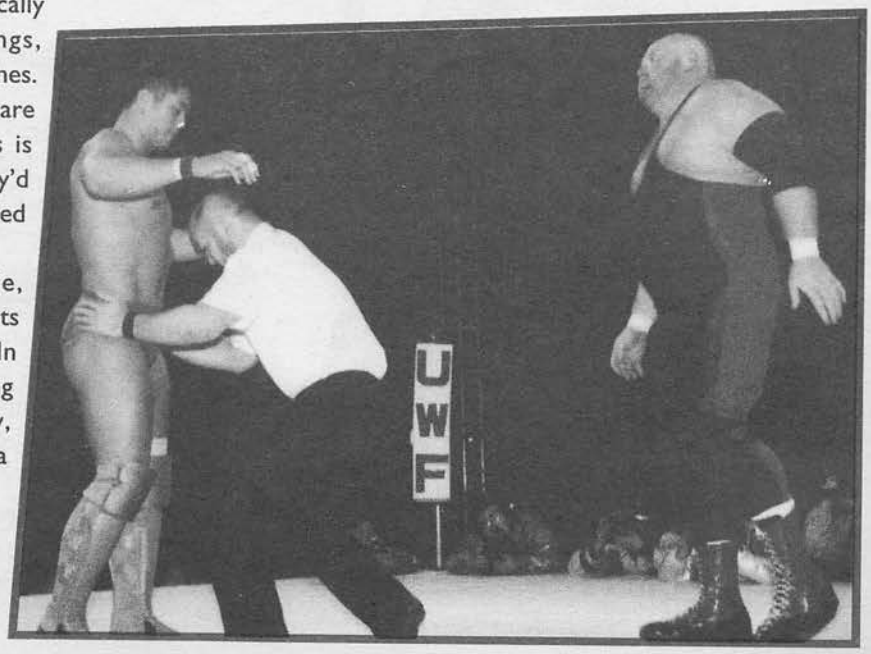
Now, however, a vicious circle has evolved. Referees rarely carry out the prematch frisk and usually call for the opening bell immediately after introductions are completed.

"Come on, you gotta be joking. It's a waste of time to frisk the athletes," said WWF referee Earl Hebner. "We never find anything!"

Hebner and the other officials have probably never stopped to think that the reason they never find anything is because most wrestlers still expect to get frisked. If the threat of frisking is lifted, you can bet they'll start bringing concealed objects into the ring very soon.

"I've definitely thought about it," said one rulebreaker who refused to be identified, even by federation. "They probably frisk me once out of every 30 matches, so where's the risk? One in 30? I'll take that."

Leaks are developing in ring security all around the world, and wrestling's terrorists are already conspiring to sneak every conceivable foreign object into the ring. Ric Flair is thinking of having a pouch sewn into his tights.



Let's give the Japanese some credit. Most federations in that country insist that their referees check each wrestler before bouts start ... provided one wrestler doesn't jump the other before the bell.

Jerry Lawler is having his thumb fitted for a poking device.

The gates have reopened. Referees have forgotten that their most important job is making sure the wrestlers battle on an even playing field with absolutely no unfair advantages.

We're not talking about a strip search. Referees are merely required to pat concealed areas of the wrestler's body, including masks, tights, socks, and shoes. If he finds something, the referee has the option of immediately disqualifying the wrestler or disposing of the foreign object. When all is fair, the bell rings, and the match begins.

The entire process should take no more than 10 seconds. Some waste of time!

Failure to do so could change the course of wrestling history ... and not for the better.

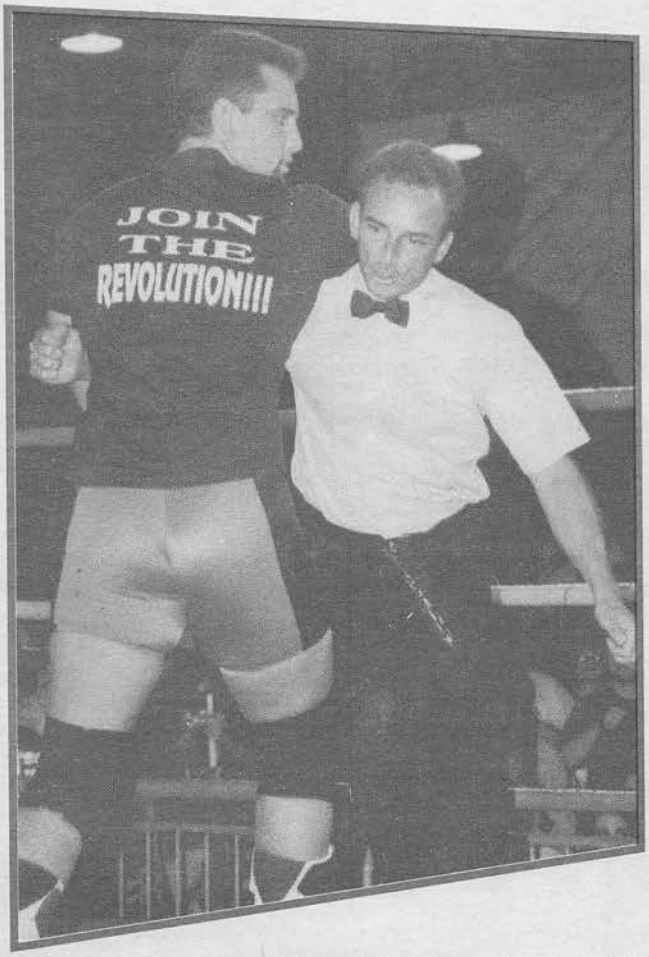
"There used to be a tremendous problem with foreign objects," said all-time great Lou Thesz. "You just about knew that almost every time you went up against certain wrestlers, they'd have something concealed in their socks or trunks. Then they added the frisking rule, and the problem was, to a large extent, solved. My biggest concern would be that we'd return to this situation where rulebreakers have an unfair advantage, and referees lose control of a match before it even begins."

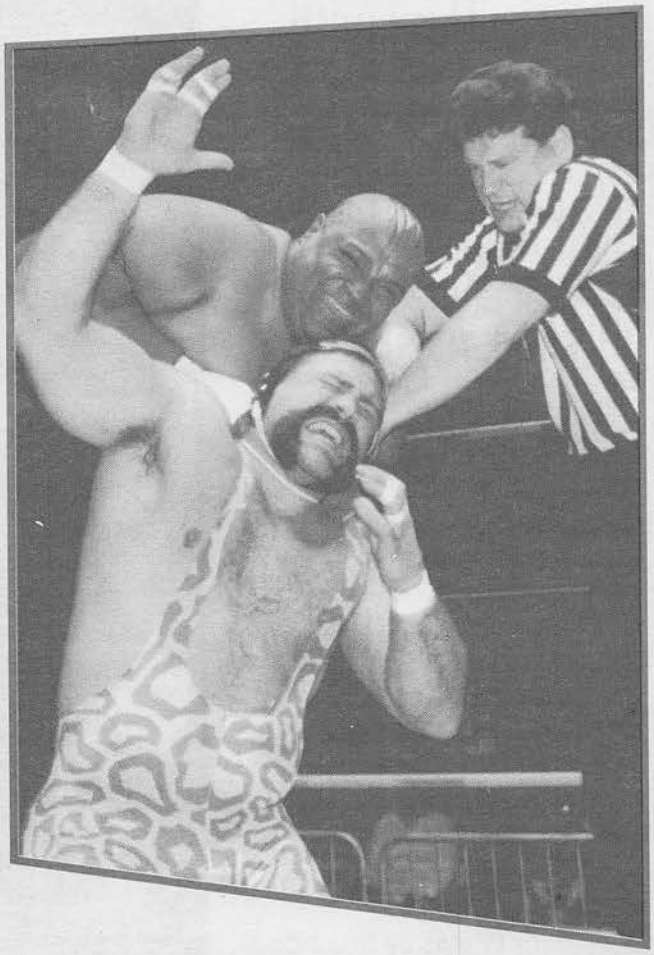
Most referees interviewed for this story felt we were overreacting and saw no need to worry about wrestling anarchy.

"I'd say I frisk once every five or six matches," said WCW referee Randy Anderson. "I don't frisk every match, because it's not necessary. Every wrestler in this federation knows that this could be the match I frisk, so they don't bother taking any chances. Sorry, guys, but I think you're getting a little picky. What's the problem, can't find any stories to fill your magazine?"

Actually, we studied tapes of 100 random matches—including many from pay-per-views—and confirmed the one-in-30 frisk ratio that one anonymous wrestler talked about. It's just not happening, and one of these days, something's going to get through.

Then we'll see why an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. □



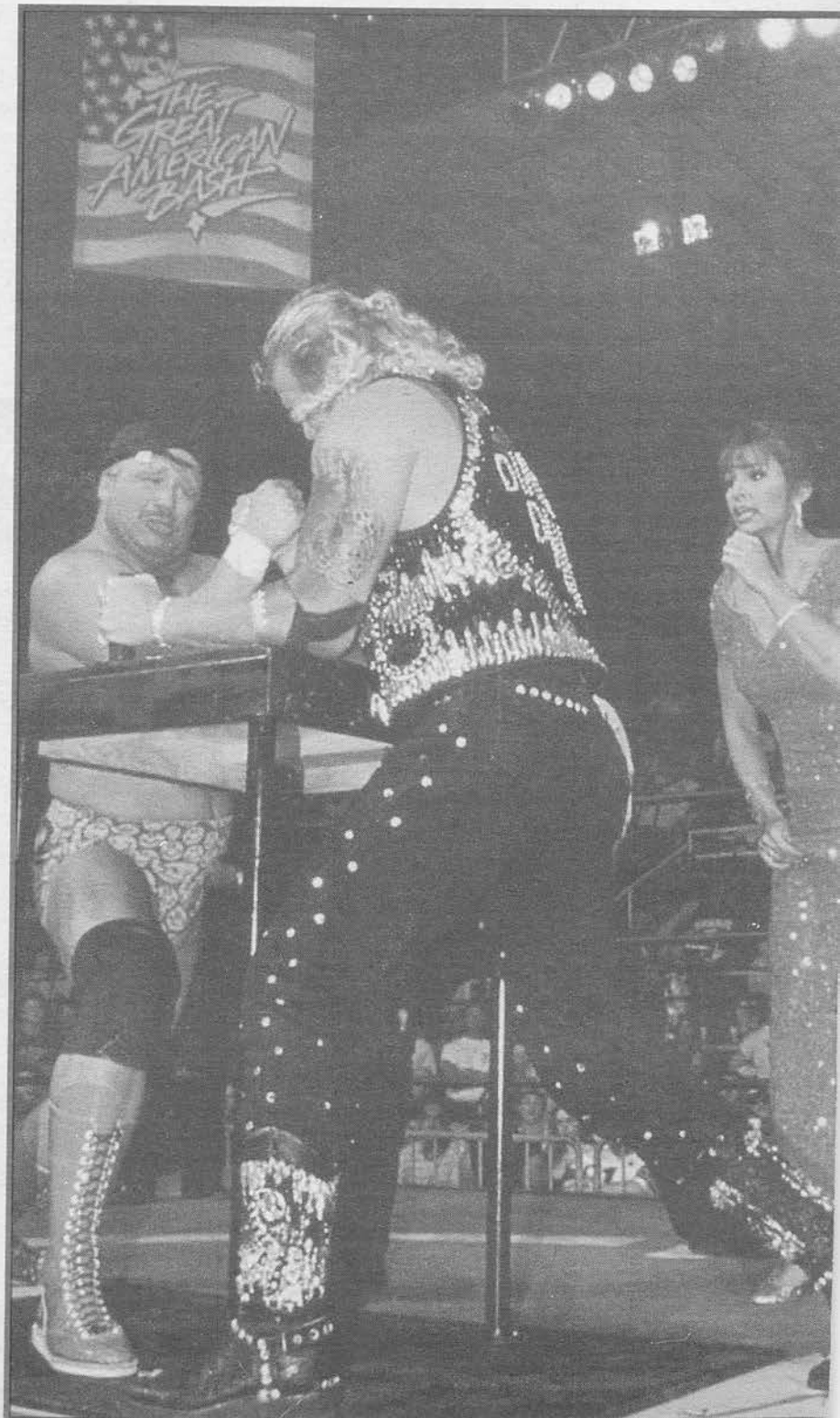


Bill Alfonso (above left) takes a lot of heat from ECW fans for trying to restore order to that federation, but maybe if WCW ref Nick Patrick were as thorough, he'd see to it that Abdullah the Butcher (above right) was stripped of all foreign objects prior to the outset of the match.

Not One Secret

DAVE SULLIVAN'S AFFAIR WITH

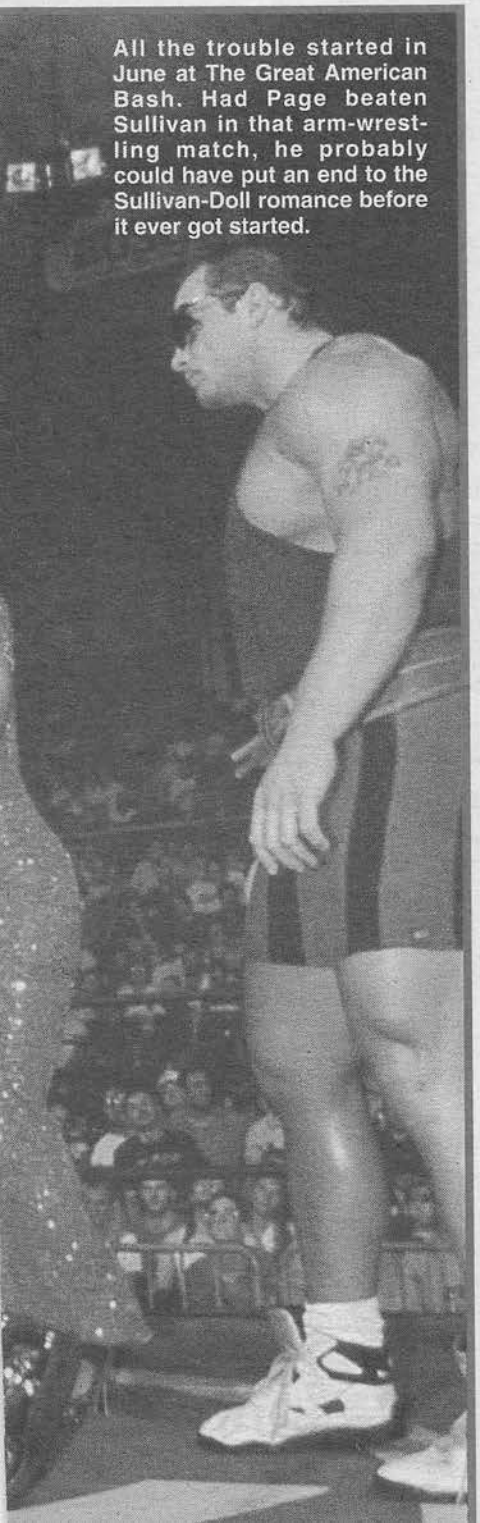
Dave Sullivan got past the first date ... and the second ... and then the third with The Diamond Doll. Their relationship is growing. As "Diamond" Dallas Page tries to keep them apart, will love keep them together?



Photos by Brent Cook & Courtesy/WCW

Date—But *Three!*

DIAMOND DOLL IS *NOT* OVER!



All the trouble started in June at The Great American Bash. Had Page beaten Sullivan in that arm-wrestling match, he probably could have put an end to the Sullivan-Doll romance before it ever got started.

By Dave Lenker

AS DATES GO, it wasn't exactly, "Pick you up at eight ... and don't be late!" Dave Sullivan won his dream date with The Diamond Doll by humbling "Diamond" Dallas Page in an arm-wrestling match at The Great American Bash and paid for the night out in blood and bruises when he was ambushed by Page and his bodyguard, Max Muscle.

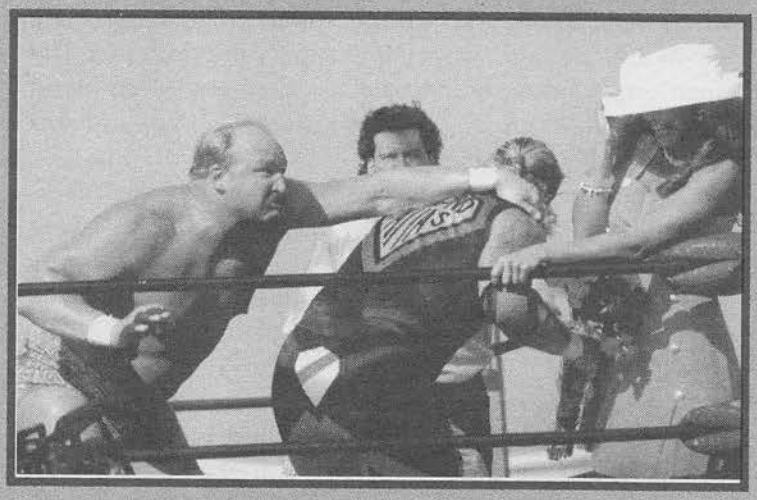
That ambush, which occurred on the crowded streets of Atlanta, would have kept a lesser man from ever laying eyes on Miss Doll again. But love, which supposedly conquers all, has kept together the unlikely couple of Dave and Doll. Three dates later, their relationship is growing strong, and Page didn't even know what was going on right under his eyes.

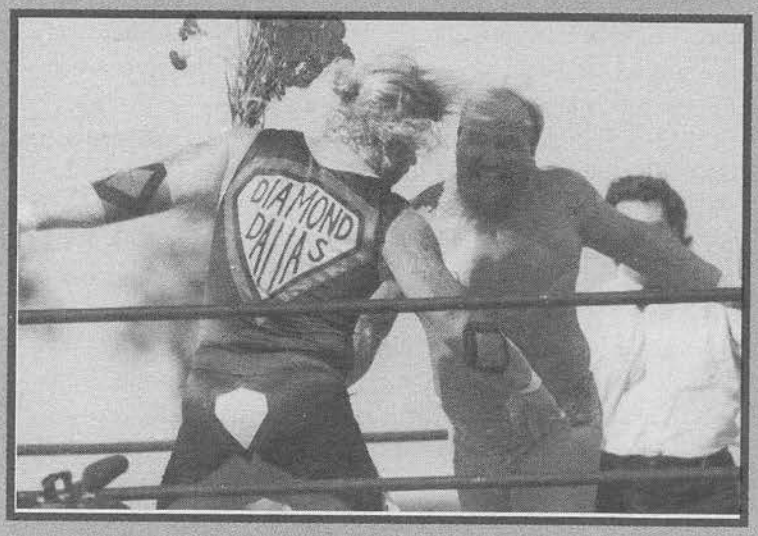
He knows now, of course. He found out just before Bash at the Beach and promptly delivered a dastardly and decisive beating to Sullivan. According to WCW insiders, Page has been seen giving Diamond Doll some nasty tongue lashings on several occasions, and the two are no longer the hot couple they once were.

"No way," said Dick Slater. "Diamond Doll used to have that lover's gaze in her eyes whenever Page walked into a room, but not anymore. They're history. The love is gone, and Page doesn't like it. Nobody knows if Doll has her eyes on someone else, but if it's Sullivan, the idiot is history."

Even if The Diamond Doll hasn't fallen in love with Sullivan, she's certainly giving him a lot of her time.

On date two, Doll and Dave went to the movies together and saw *Batman Forever.* Afterward, they stopped for ice cream at a popular downtown hangout. One person who saw them during the evening said that Doll and Dave "looked like best friends, not like lovers at all. They just seemed to really be enjoying each other's company."





Page didn't like it when his Doll accepted flowers from a fan at Bash at the Beach and he let her know (top). Always the gentleman, Dave saved the damsel in distress (middle), then wobbled Page with some punches (bottom).

Another observer saw Doll give Dave "an innocent goodbye kiss on the lips. Very short, very friendly. There was nothing romantic about it at all."

A few weeks later, Diamond Doll flew in late for Clash of the Champions XXXI in Daytona Beach, Florida, because she enjoyed brunch that morning with Sullivan at a fashionable Peachtree Street restaurant.

"They ate and talked, talked and ate," reported a restaurant patron.

"The reservation was under the name Sal Evad," revealed the maitre d'. "But I recognized him immediately. His brother once tried to destroy our kitchen, then he put a spell on the chef. That was a long time ago."

Again, Doll and Dave acted like friends, not lovers, even though Dave picked up the bill. Afterward, Dave called a limousine for his date and parted by delicately kissing her on the hand.

"It was positively charming," said another restaurant patron. "I'll never forget his look as the limousine drove away. He looked like a hurt puppy. There was love in his eyes."

Confronted with the reports of dates two and three, Page denied that he had "lost control" of The Diamond Doll and claimed she had assured him that she had no romantic interest in Sullivan.

"I either believe her or I don't," Page said. "I don't have time to worry about it right now, so I'll believe her. But if she's lying to me ... well, no woman lies to me, and no woman turns me down."

For now, Diamond Doll apparently has no intention of severing relations with Page. "He's her meal ticket," Max Muscle said. "She wouldn't dare split up with him. What would she do?

Where would she go? She's nothing but a weak woman who needs a strong man to get her through the day. She ain't got much goin' on upstairs, if you know what I'm sayin'. Sullivan? That moron can't do anything for her. He can't even spell his name right."

Sullivan responded to our inquiry with a firm, "No comment." Asked whether he had any interest in The Diamond Doll, Dave said, "She's a very pretty lady. I don't know why she's wasting her time with that loser Page." As to the possibility of Doll being interested in him, Dave said, "I don't know. Maybe. I guess."

Dates four, five, six, etc., might have already happened by the time you read this. Things could start to get serious. Maybe they'll announce they're going steady by Thanksgiving. Wedding bells could be ringing by springtime. Engagement ring in hand, Sullivan could get down on his knees. He is a very impulsive person.

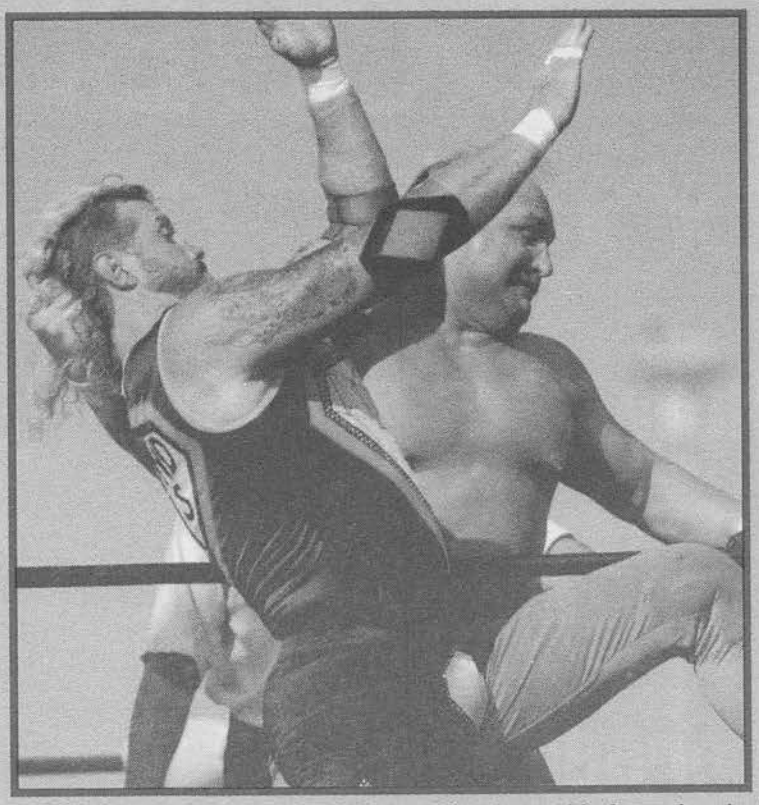
But before that happens, Sullivan and Page will fight like no men have fought before. Put a woman in the middle of two men and sparks inevitably fly. Make it a beautiful woman and the battle becomes a war.

Is Diamond Doll worth fighting over?

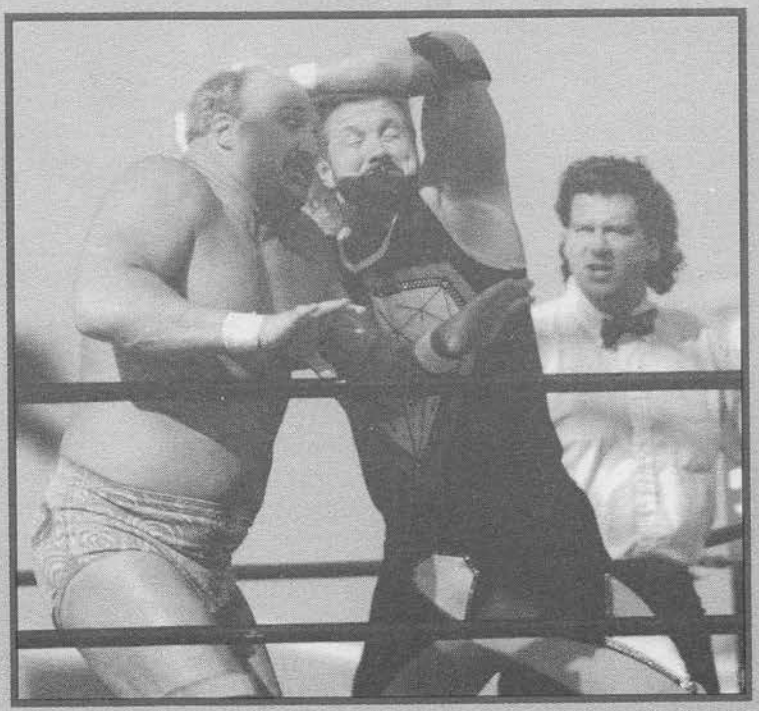
Those who know her say she's pretty but dim, charming but narrowminded.

"She's had a lot of boyfriends," reported a source. "She goes through men very quickly. Who knows, maybe this time she's found the right man, but Dave Sullivan? I doubt it. But maybe they were made for each other. They can have very one-dimensional conversations."

Love can be blind and stupid. In this case, it's a most dangerous game. □



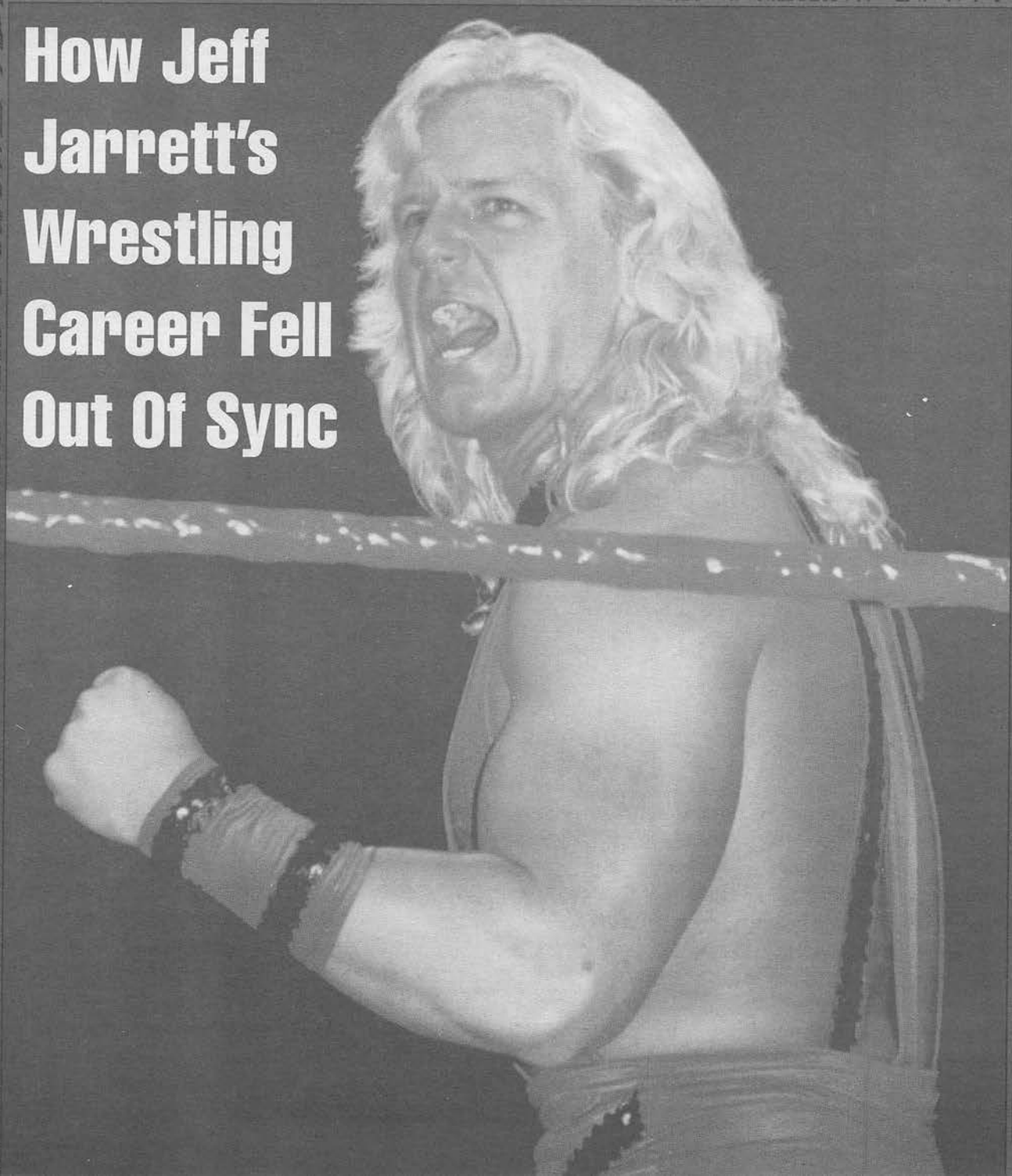
Sullivan had a look of determination and anger on his face when he rammed Page's face into a turnbuckle. No titles were at stake in this bout, but the love and admiration of a beautiful woman may have been.



Page wasn't his usual jovial, pompous self during this bout. He was determined to teach Sullivan to stay away from his woman. Apparently, Dave didn't get the message.

"DOUBLE-J" DOUBLE-CROSSED!

How Jeff Jarrett's Wrestling Career Fell Out Of Sync



The July WWF In Your House pay-per-view was supposed to be a showcase for Jeff Jarrett the wrestler and Jeff Jarrett the singer. Instead, it may have marked the end of "Double-J's" strange WWF career

By Chris Bernucca

They took my title from me.
I guess it wasn't my day.
But when they took my dream.
I just had to walk away.

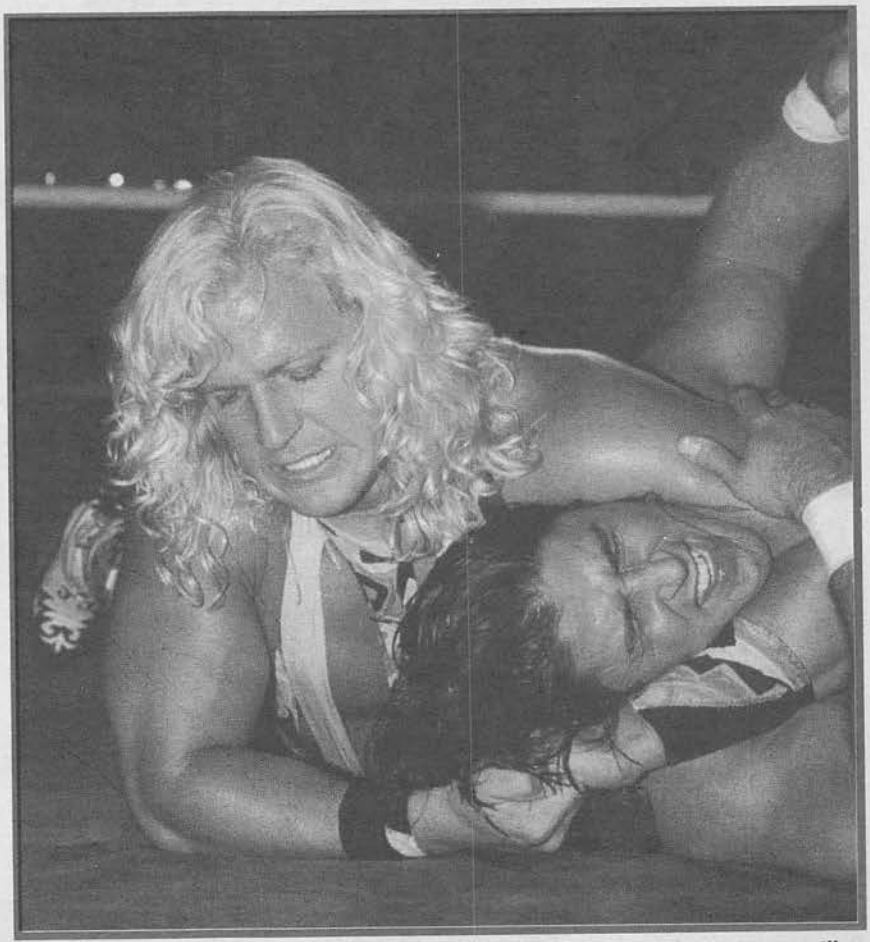
YOU CAN ADD your own twangy guitar riff to the above lyrics, which could be the chorus to Jeff Jarrett's next musical masterpiece. Jarrett, normally a wrestler and aspiring country crooner by trade, is now neither. And that has him singing the blues.

"Maybe he should write a song about it," said one WWF fan favorite. "A lot of country music is about personal experience, especially the times that ain't so good. You gotta admit, it's a hell of a story."

Jarrett's recent departure from the WWF is quite a story. He arrived in Nashville, Tennessee—the home of country music—for a WWF In Your House pay-per-view event as the Intercontinental champion and a budding star in the music business. Before the night was over, he no longer had his title, his job, or his dignity.

The WWF will only say that it parted ways with Jarrett over "creative differences." But the scuttlebutt is that the federation was unhappy with Jarrett exploiting his exposure as a wrestler to attempt to advance his career as a country singer.

Jarrett will never be remembered as the greatest I-C champion of all-time. His title reign was marked with defenses in which he either left the ring and lost by countout or had The



In the nights preceding his final Intercontinental title defense, Jarrett was wrestling Jim Powers in a series of Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling matches. He did not foresee the trouble ahead.

Roadie interfere on his behalf, thereby helping him to retain his title. Coupled with Jarrett's uncontrollable desire to take the stage, the WWF's accusations may not have been unfounded.

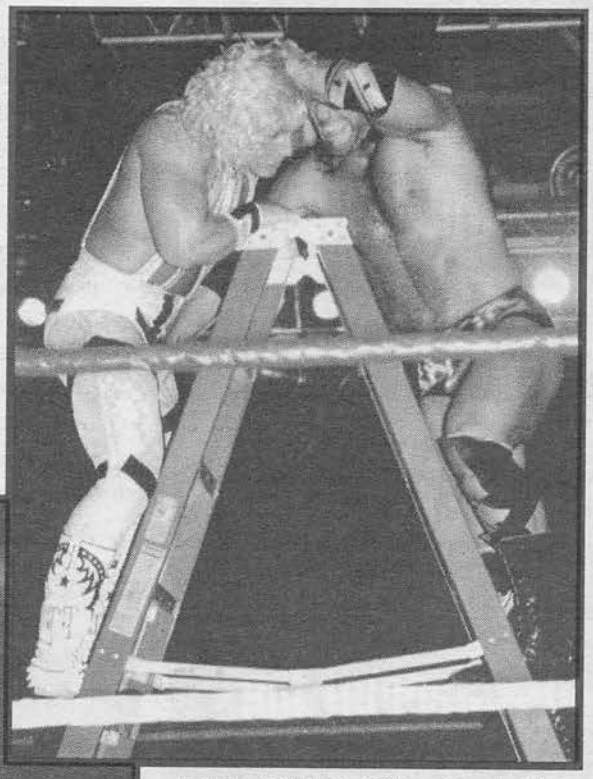
But if Jarrett's night in Nashville was his last in the WWF, he certainly gave the fans something by which to remember him. His I-C title bout with Shawn Michaels lasted one second less than 20 minutes and was a definite Match of the Year candidate.

Jarrett was counting on the assistance of The Roadie, his personal sidekick. Roadie was supposed to grab hold of Michaels when Jarrett whipped him into the ropes. But Roadie wasn't paying attention and, after Michaels reversed the whip, grabbed hold of his own man instead. Jarrett fell, got up, turned around, was superkicked, and got pinned. It was that quick. Although the mistake was an honest one, there are a few doubters who believe Roadie double-crossed Jarrett because he was jealous of the attention he was receiving, and that Roadie was really doing the singing on "With My Baby Tonight."

"Not true," said one WWF rulebreaker. "The Roadie always gave Jeff his full support. Besides, why would he do that? By backstabbing Jarrett, he'd only be backstabbing himself." Roadie—also known as Brian Armstrong—has departed the WWF as well, landing in Smoky Mountain Wrestling.

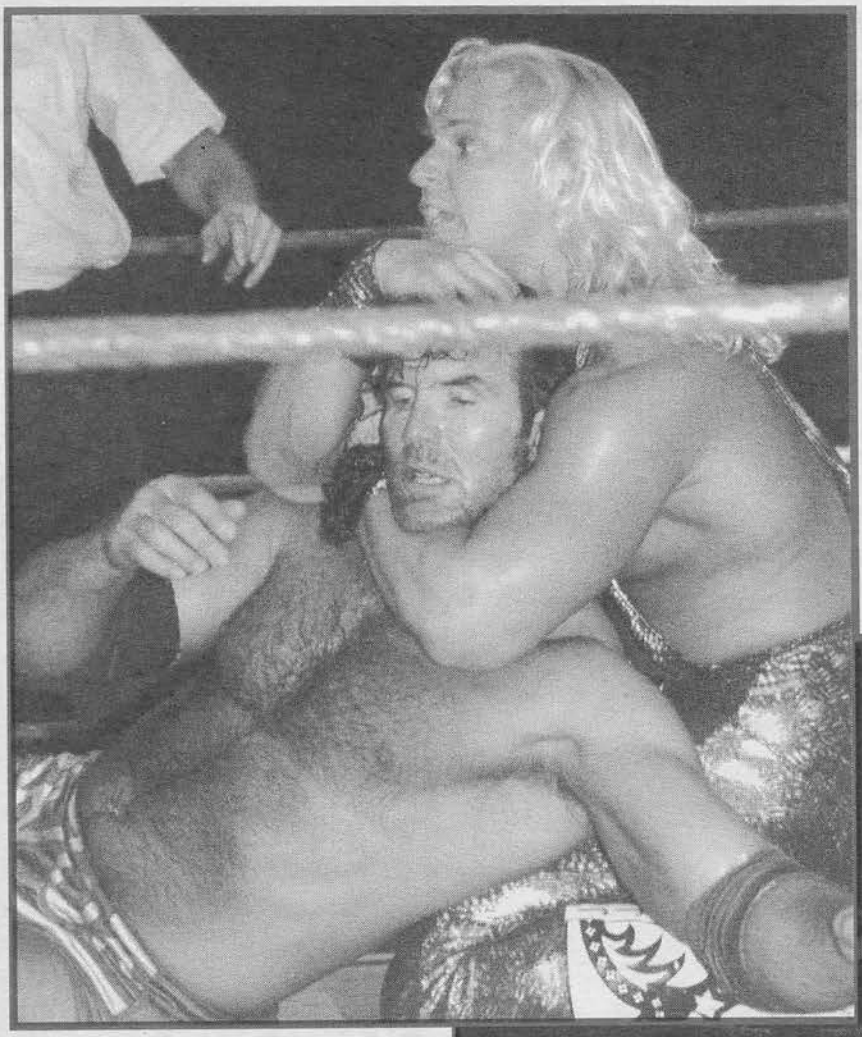
Jarrett isn't talking publicly these days, but if he were, he'd probably tell you the WWF double-crossed him. He once said the executives in the WWF were excited about his musical talents until they discovered that there was little additional revenue that came with it. The powers-that-be quickly changed their tune about giving Jarrett the freedom to express himself musically within the confines of a wrestling program.

"They're always looking for someone who's a little unusual, and when he told them he was trying to become a country singer, they were really hot for the idea," one wrestler said. "But when the lawyers found out that there was no huge financial gain that would come from it, all of a



Jarrett climbed quite a few ladders during his long feud with Razor Ramon in 1995. Now he may never get a chance to climb the ladder of success in the WWF again.

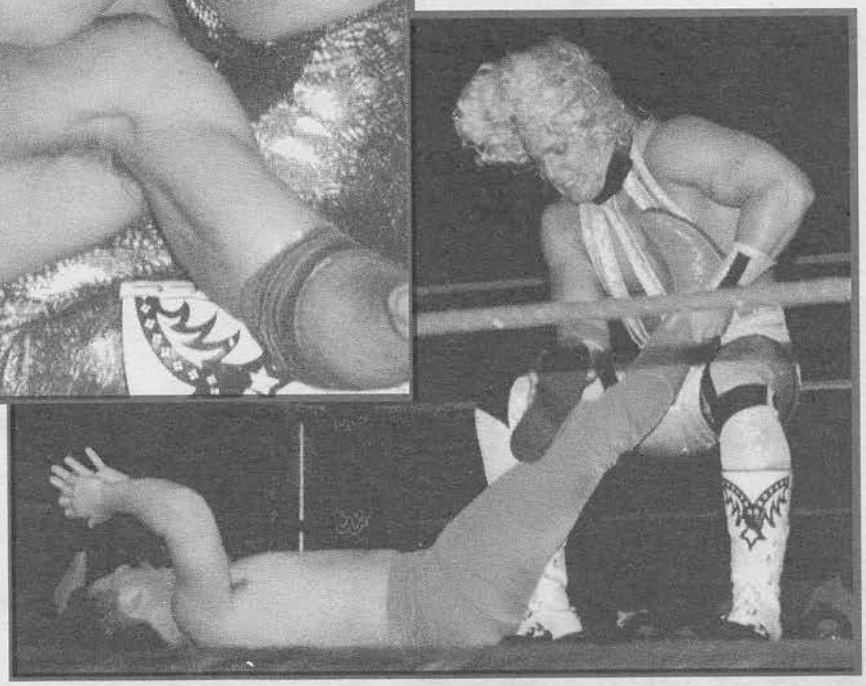
Was it really Jarrett belting out "With My Baby Tonight" at In Your House? We might never know for sure. What we do know is that Jarrett would have probably been much better off had he stuck to wrestling all along.



upholding the reputation of the USWA when facing WWF grapplers. But once he established himself as one of the better competitors in the WWF, he seemed to invest more energy in his singing. WWF executives weren't happy about anyone using their federation as a springboard to another career.

"I don't know why that's an issue," Roadie said. "Isn't that what Hulk Hogan ended up doing? Didn't Bret Hart do a little bit of acting last year?

No matter what you think about "Double-J's" singing, you should respect him as a fine wrestler who executes holds like the sleeper (left) and figure-four (below) well. The sport is better when he's involved in it.



sudden, it wasn't such a good idea."

As always, there are two sides to every story. The WWF would not speak on the record, but sources within the federation say that Jarrett took advantage of his standing. He was actually the man who started the WWF/USWA talent exchange when, in entered the WWF in 1993 as part of a talent-exchange program with the USWA, where Jarrett had starred for many years. He adopted the moniker of "Double-J" years after establishing himself as a competent, no-nonsense, somewhat colorless grappler. And, the source said, the federation became upset when Jarrett's focus seemed to be geared more toward singing than wrestling.

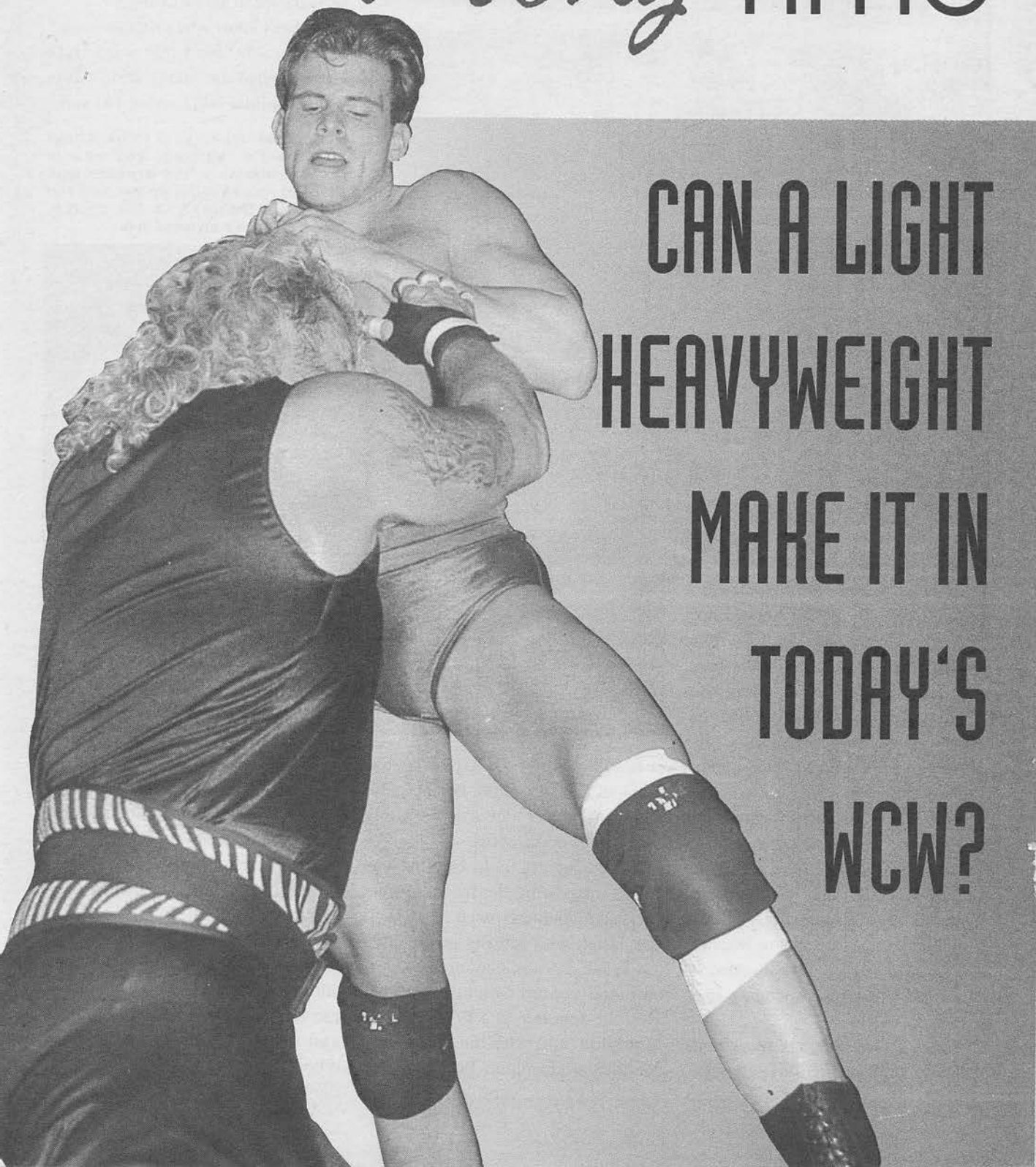
The buzz regarding his alleged lip-synching started earlier this year, right around the time when he began defending his I-C title via the countout and DQ routes. Perhaps a bit naive, he never saw any parallels between the occurrences.

While Jarrett feels like he was double-crossed by the federation, he may have double-crossed himself. It was Jarrett who actually precipitated the WWF-USWA cooperative promotional venture when, in August 1992, he appeared at a WWF card in Memphis and challenged Intercontinental champion Bret Hart. He was always was very serious about

Heck, Bob Backlund is running for President. Why were they giving Jeff a hard time when those other guys can do whatever they please?"

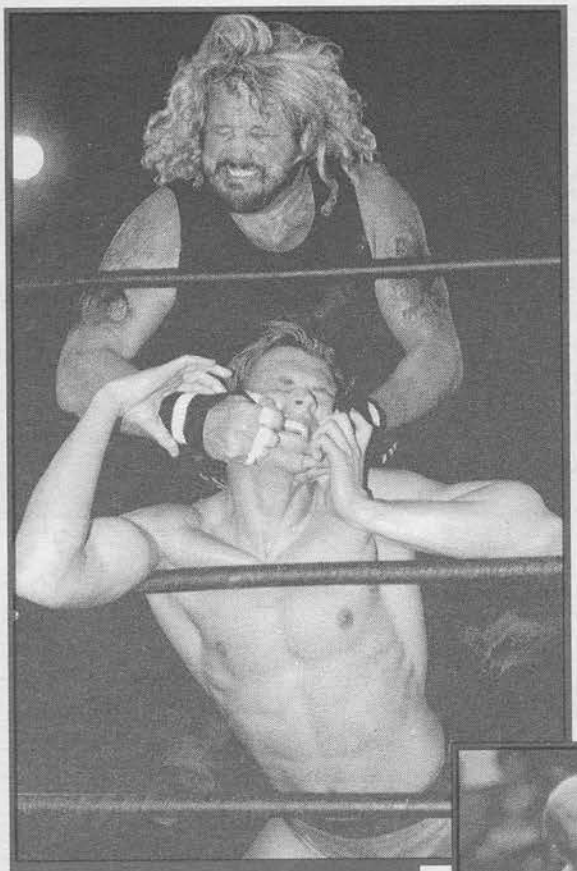
Despite the disagreements between Jarrett and the WWF, "Double-J" is expected to meet with federation higher-ups in the near future and discuss a possible return. If he is allowed to re-enter the federation, you can bet he will be leaving his guitar and his vocal cords behind. If he doesn't, the WWF may turn him into the Milli Vanilli of wrestling. □

Wright Place, *Wrong* Time



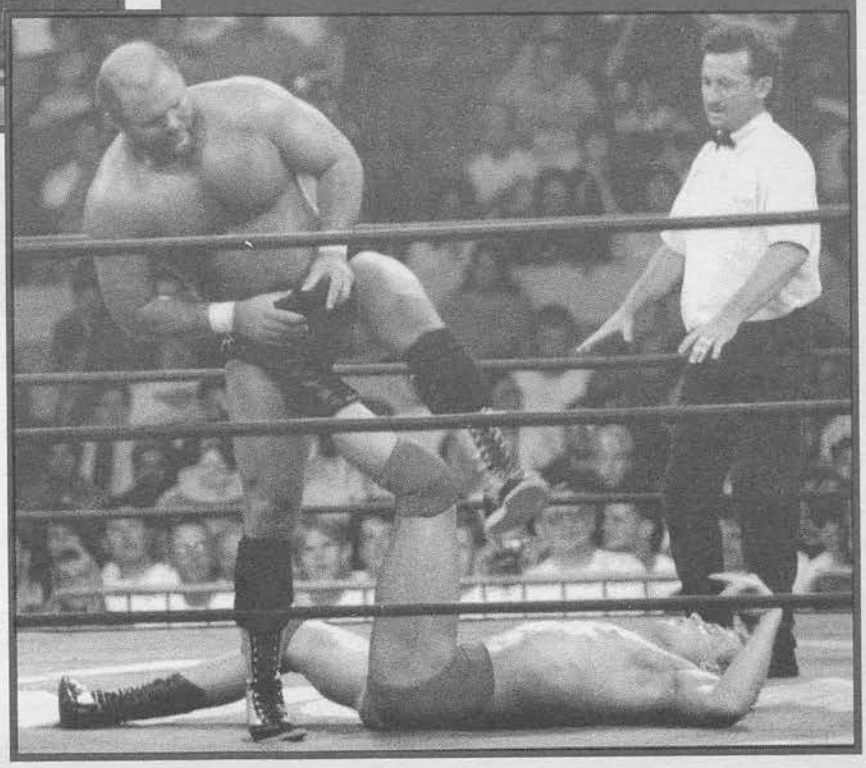
CAN A LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT MAKE IT IN TODAY'S WCW?

All Alex Wright ever wanted to do was wrestle, and he felt he chose the right promotion to do it. Now, instead of winning technical matches, he faces giants, brawlers, and his own doubts about his taste in promotions



If Alex Wright is to survive in today's WCW, he must learn how to defend himself when big brawlers like Dallas Page savagely attack him. All in all, he'd rather compete against men who'll try to outwrestle him.

Wright got to do *some* actual wrestling when he took on Arn Anderson at Slamboree. Still, Arn weighs close to 250 pounds, and at this stage in his career, he'd rather use his fists than a series of scientific holds.



By Steve Anderson

"YOU'RE A LITTLE man livin' in a big man's world!" That quote has become as much of a catch phrase as "what a rush" used to be for Road Warrior Hawk. But it's more than a catch phrase for Alex Wright—it is his reality.

When Alex Wright was cutting

his wrestling teeth in Germany a few years ago, he dreamed of coming to America and competing in a major promotion—preferably one that emphasized technical ability over size and strength. A promotion boasting the likes of Ric Flair, Steve Austin, and Brian Pillman. A promotion like WCW.

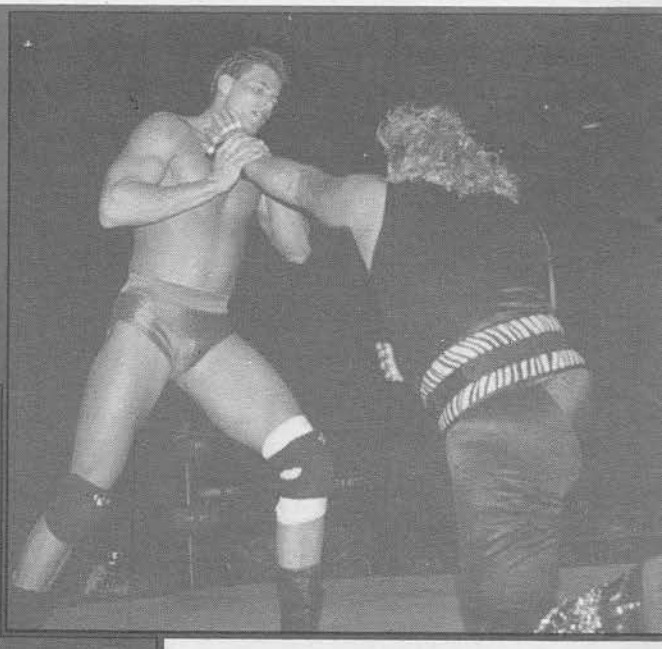
At the tender age of 18, he accomplished the goal that most wrestlers never do: He began competing in WCW. The promotion's philosophy fit him like a glove. He thrived and quickly began to break into title contention. WCW began making noises about establishing a cruiserweight division and putting together a tournament to crown a champion—someone in the mold of an Alex Wright.

But soon something stood in the way of Wright's progress. The cruiserweight idea was forgotten, and the emphasis began to dramatically shift back toward the super heavyweights. This can be directly attributed to the influence of one Hulk Hogan.

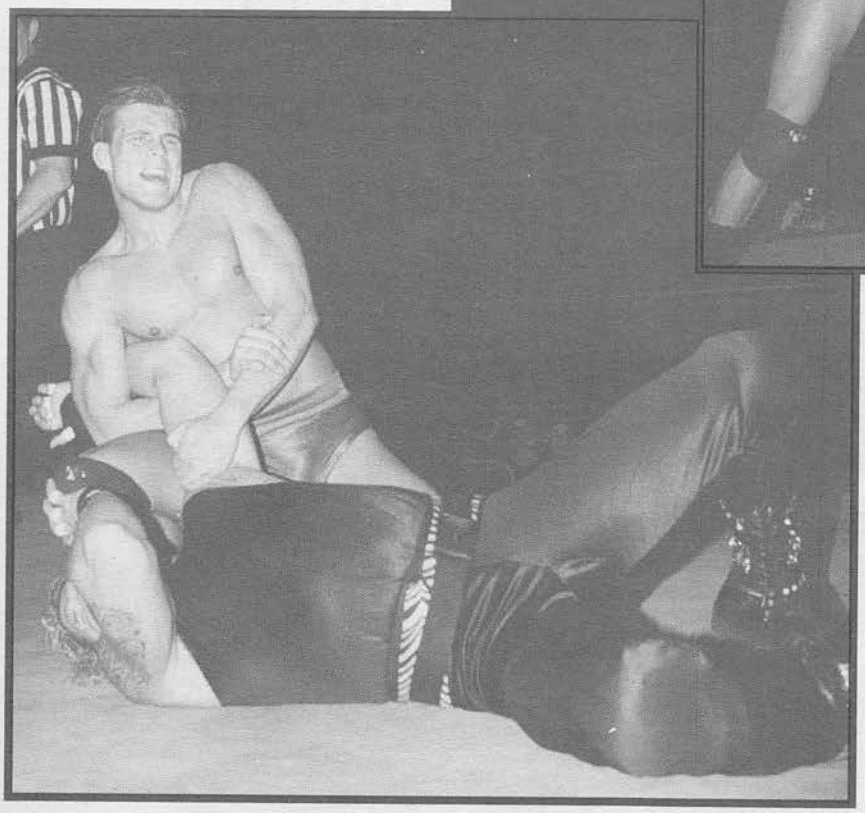
Hogan's WWF heyday was oriented around wrestling monsters. A borderline super heavyweight himself, he found that he had a knack for knocking other giants down to size. When he jumped to WCW and won the World title while still wiping his feet on the welcome mat, Hogan found himself in a position of tremendous power.

Hogan wanted large wrestlers who could strike fear in the hearts of fans as his competition. And it didn't hurt that WCW had signed a few of his allies who happened to have more bulk and muscle than technical ability.

Despite an impressive winning streak, Alex Wright began running into walls. Most were the kind that weighed 250 pounds or more, and most were the kind he could not knock down. As quickly as he rang up victories early in the year, Alex Wright was suddenly suffering defeat after defeat once summer started.



When "Das Wunderkind" is at his best, he'll attack an opponent's arm early in a match (right), then try to wear him down on the mat (below). That's not always possible if your opponent weighs 300-plus pounds.



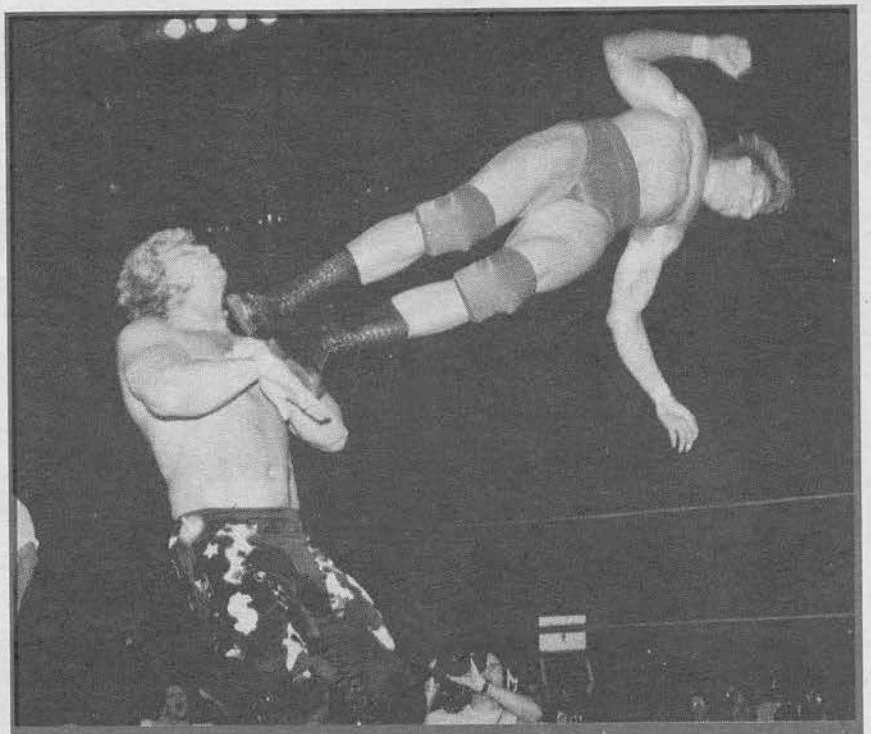
"Das Wunderkind" is now competing in a promotion that he no longer recognizes, one that would rather promote a muscle-packed monster than a technical wizard. Three years ago, during the short life of the WCW light heavyweight title, Wright could have at least been given the chance to take on wrestlers closer to his size a bit more often.

But this is a new day in WCW. And Wright does not like it at all. Lately he has been facing too many men who would rather throw a left hook than a flying dropkick.

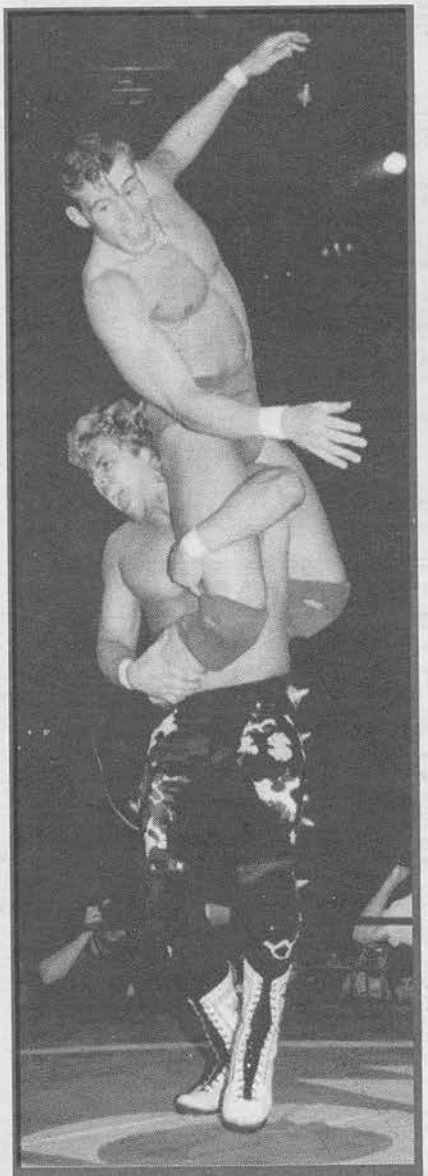
"It is extremely frustrating," he said. "I trained to wrestle, not brawl and not perform tests of strength."

The *coup de grace* came at Clash of the Champions XXXI on August 6. Wright was set to wrestle "Diamond" Dallas Page. Though Page outweighed Wright by 40 pounds, most picked the young rookie to emerge victorious. But DDP came out on top that night.

Wright was not outwrestled. He was overpowered and outfoxed. Most would chalk it up as a bad night. Wright had a different take.



Without his dropkick and other aerial weapons, Wright becomes just another ordinary wrestler. Dropkicks aren't enough, though, if you're in the ring every night with men like Shark and Kamala.



Had WCW ever made good on its promise to institute a cruiserweight division, Wright and Brian Pillman could have had dozens of thrilling battles. Both are still waiting for that to happen.

"I came to WCW for a variety of competition, to face many great *athletes*," he emphasized. "I do not want to be a punching bag for giant brawlers in every match I wrestle."

After the "Diamond" Dallas debacle, Wright confronted WCW Commissioner Nick Bockwinkel about the status of the promotion. The normally subdued and polite rookie was nowhere to be seen. "You told me when I came in that I would compete in the cruiserweight division," Wright fumed. "Now I'm facing men who are too heavy to be called just heavyweights."

"Mr. Wright, I understand your frustration," Bockwinkel responded. "But this is the talent base that we have. It's a good talent base. You're a professional. I would expect you to conduct yourself as one."

"I *am* a professional, sir," countered Wright, his face getting redder by the second. "A professional *wrestler*. I used to face professional wrestlers in WCW. I'm a man and I'll take on anyone you put in front of me, but I want an opportunity to be able to showcase my skills. And you can't do that against 300-pound brawlers."

"Mr. Wright," said Bockwinkel. "If you expect to get into contention, you will have to face these gentleman to move your way up."

With that, Bockwinkel threw up his hands and walked away.

The commissioner was correct. Early on, Wright was matched against wrestlers against whom he could showcase his skills, but the sport of wrestling does not allow you the luxury of handpicking your opponents. Wrestlers of all shapes and sizes, of all different styles, are all battling for the few elite championships. For Wright to succeed, he must be able to beat all of them. Whether he knows it or not, WCW is working in his best interests.

He has to learn that the word "wrestling" is not to be taken literally. What this sport really is is a battle for survival. □

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WORD LIST

GAME #69

ARENA	MATCH
ATTACK	PINFALL
BODYSLAM	PUNCH
BOOTS	RING
CHAMPION	ROPES
CHOKE	SAVATE
DROPKICK	SUPLEX ✓
LEGDROP	TEAM

HIDDEN MATCH:

DIAGRAM

H	E	E	K	O	H	C	U	P	S
B	N	T	C	L	K	H	U	O	E
G	O	A	A	R	E	N	A	K	P
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C	P	S	T	H	A	G	N	I	R
T	M	E	A	S	R	S	I	K	C
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L	C	S	U	P	L	E	X	R	A
P	O	R	D	G	E	L	I	D	R

WRESTLING WORD-FIND CHALLENGE RULES & REGULATIONS

Enter as often as you wish. Open to residents of the continental U.S. 12 or older; under 18 need parental permission to participate. Void in CA, MN, NJ, LA, GA, and where prohibited by law. The contest begins 8/15/95 and ends 1/15/96. Contest consists of three games. Game 69 begins 8/15/95 and ends 11/15/95; Game 70 begins 9/15/95 and ends 12/15/95; Game 71 begins 10/15/95 and ends 1/15/96. Approximately five days after each game, one First Prize winner and five Second Prize winners will be selected at random from among all eligible entries received that correctly identify the hidden match for that game. First Prize winners will each receive $250 cash; Second Prize winners will each receive a 6-issue subscription to *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* (retail value of subscription $15). Total retail value of all prizes to be awarded is approximately $325. For each game, the odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received that correctly identify the hidden match. All prizes will be awarded. No substitutions allowed. **NO PURCHASE OR TELEPHONE CALL NECESSARY TO PARTICIPATE. For complete rules and/or mail-in entry form with word list clues and word-find diagram, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: WRESTLING WORD-FIND CHALLENGE, P.O. BOX 625, DEVON, PA 19333, and at your option, identify the number of the game you wish to enter.** All mail-in entries must be postmarked no later than the ending date of the game entered (as indicated on the entry form provided by the sponsor) and received no later than five days after the ending date of that game. Contest sponsored by London Publishing Co. and Advanced Telecom Services, Inc., 996 Old Eagle School Road, Wayne, PA 19087-1806 (610) 964-9146.

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SPECIAL SECTION

THE SUPERSTARS OF TODAY PICK THE SUPERSTARS OF TOMORROW

THE SUPERSTARS OF yesterday: Lou Thesz, Verne Gagne, Bruno Sammartino, The Fabulous Kangaroos, Buddy Rogers, Ivan Koloff, Harley Race.

The superstars of today: Hulk Hogan, Sting, Diesel, Shawn Michaels, Tony Anthony, Luna Vachon, Jerry Lawler, Sid Vicious, The Nasty Boys, Scott Steiner.

Care to take a shot at guessing the superstars of tomorrow?

Well, we did, although we asked the superstars of today to do our dirty work.

Not surprisingly, wrestling's future superstars are wrestling before your very eyes.

Sure, that's the easy way out. In all likelihood, there's some heavyweight high school wrestling bigshot out there who's going to turn down the scholarship offers and make his splash in wrestling before we know what hit us. Wrestling schools around the world are secretly training young studs who plan on springing surprises on the wrestling establishment.

You know what? We can hardly wait.

The only thing more exciting than a great championship match is a hot, young rookie making his mark and shaking up a federation. Youngsters infuse excitement into pro wrestling and give us reason to look forward to tomorrow. Plod on, old men, but look over your shoulders: The future is catching up!

The problem with wrestling, however, is that predicting the future is more difficult than in other sports. Tomorrow's NFL stars come from today's college senior class, and every football fan knows the identity of them. Tomorrow's baseball stars come from today's minor-league rosters.

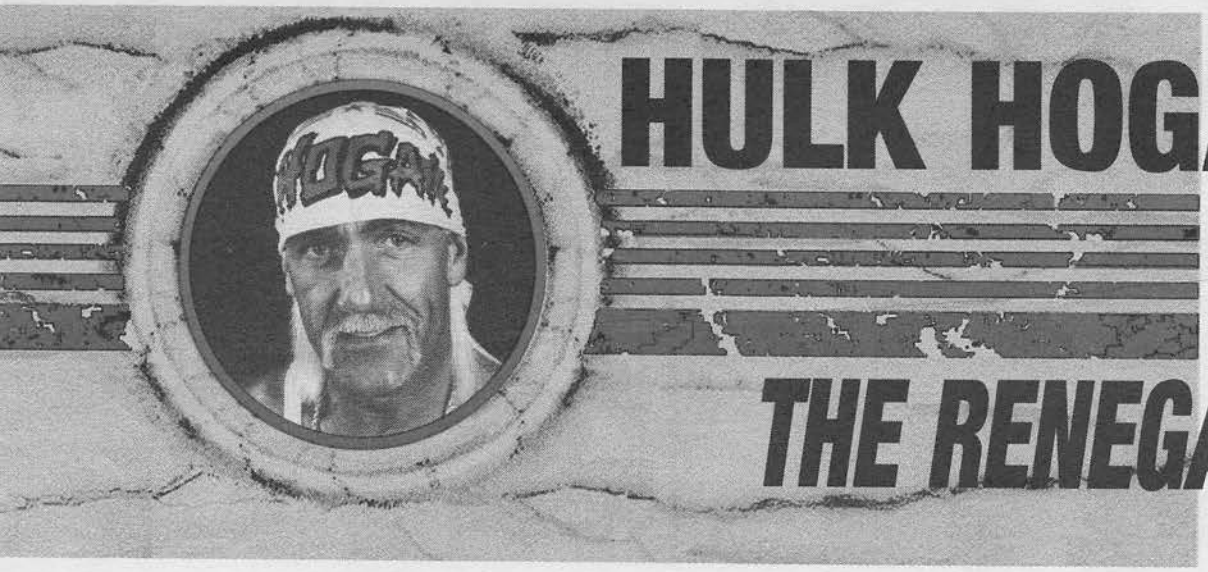
Wrestlers come from all over. Some of them are wrestling in school. Others are playing football. Some come out of the jungles of Uganda or the Sudan. Wrestling doesn't have a draft or an organized development program. So predictions can only be made based upon what is known.

With this in mind, the editors of WRESTLING SUPERSTARS asked 10 of the sport's greatest stars of the present the following question: Which current young wrestler will be a superstar of the upcoming 10 years? We asked them to consider the question carefully, then came back to them a week later for an answer. With pen and paper in hand, we jotted down their often surprising responses. A few of the wrestlers were so enthusiastic that they insisted on sitting down at computers and doing the writing themselves.

We're happy to report that, unlike last time, today's superstars were surprisingly willing to make their prognostications. Although most of them pointed out that they plan on dominating the sport for a long time, they mostly agreed that the sport has a bright future and the young stars must eventually carry the torch.

These superstars of today conveyed their hope for the future. It is contained within the superstars of tomorrow.

Read on, enjoy, and hope right along with us.

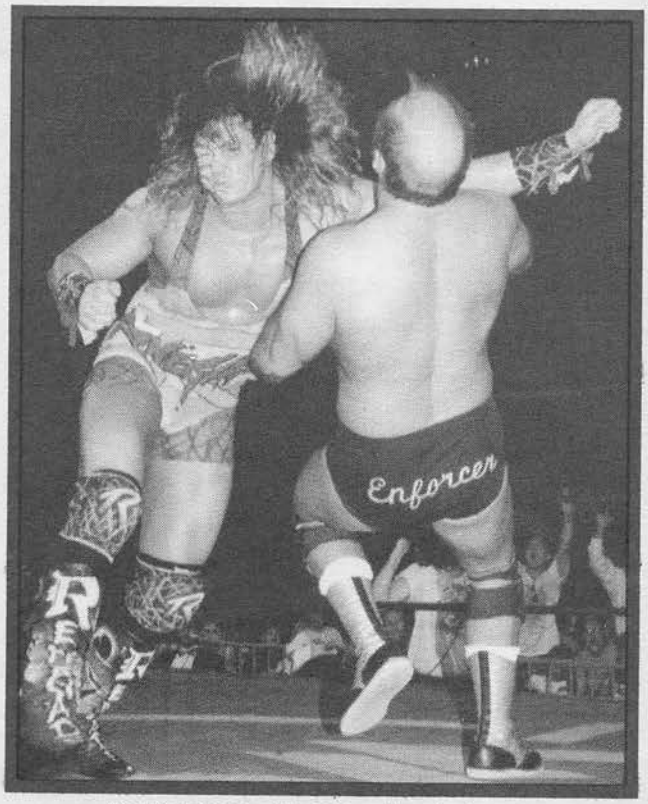


HULK HOGAN picks THE RENEGADE

YOU KNOW SOMETHING, a lot of people laughed when I brought The Renegade to town at WCW Uncensored. Maybe they were expecting something a little larger, a little more famous, but the way I do business has nothing to do with fame and fortune. I was looking for the right man for the job, and I found him.

Maybe my man Renegade isn't the biggest man around, but he's got more guts and more desire than any two men I've ever seen, and that includes the person I see when I look in the mirror. He's already the WCW TV champion—he beat Arn Anderson, one of the toughest, most experienced competitors in the world, and since then, he and my man Jimmy Hart have shown everybody what he's made of. He goes out at Bash at the Beach and beats Paul Orndorff, another one of the most experienced wrestlers in the world, and then does it again at the Clash.

You can say what you want, but I don't hear too many whispers behind my back anymore, because the people know that I was right and they were wrong. They called Renegade a cheap imitation and said he was trying to steal somebody's act. Well, let me tell you something, if he's an imitation, he's better than the original.

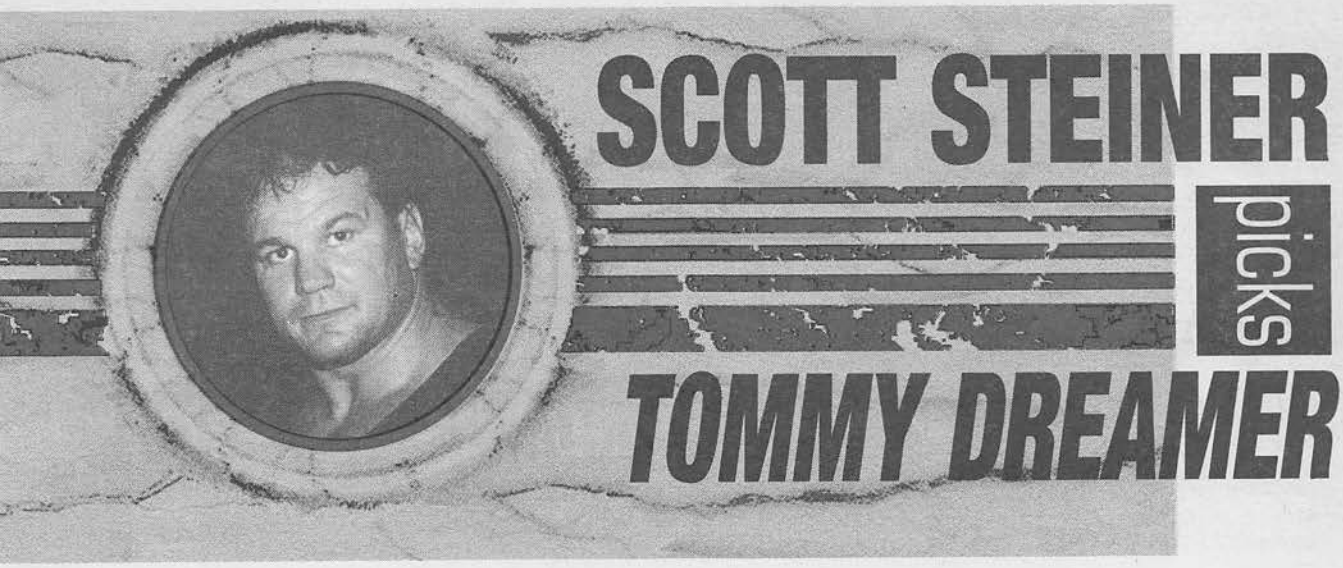


The Renegade clotheslines Arn Anderson

Renegade's strong, and he's got that great killer instinct, but what most people, except myself and Jimmy Hart, don't know about him is that he works hard and wants to get better. He's not satisfied with what he's accomplished so far, although he's done more than most wrestlers accomplish in their whole lifetimes. He's got this great desire, this great hunger, and now I'm going to tell you something he told me, but would never tell anybody else:

The other day, we were having lunch down at the beach, and he looked me square in the eye and said, "Hulk, you're my friend, and I appreciate all you've done for me, but one day, people are going to look at me and say, 'Man, he's even better than Hogan was.'" I told him to go for it.

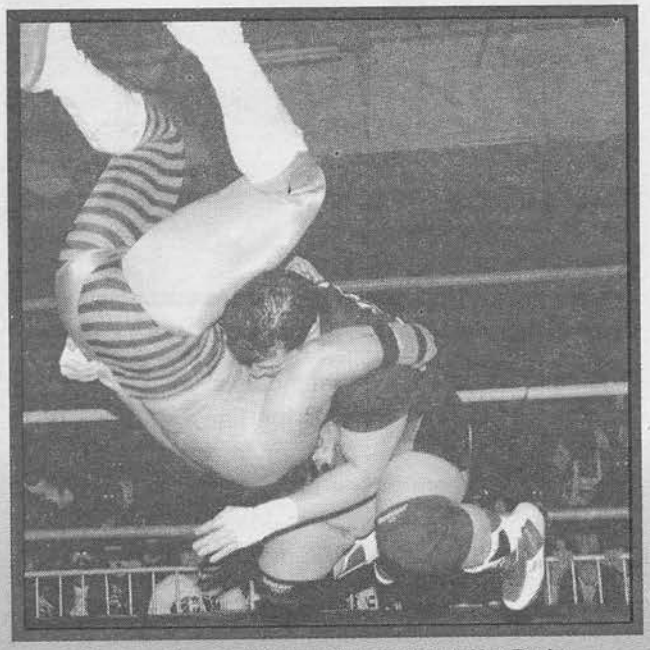
I saw what this man was all about before he even wrestled a single match, and now I'm glad to see that all of the little "Hulkamaniacs" are getting behind him, too. And whatcha gonna do, WCW rulebreakers, when The Renegade runs wild on you?



SCOTT STEINER AND his brother Rick learned a long time ago that ability will get you far in professional wrestling, but it won't always get you as far as you want to go.

"There's more to it than knowing the moves and being strong," Scott said. "Though guys like that aren't a dime a dozen, there are a lot of wrestlers who had that combination, but never made it. They're back home now, working in convenience stores and telling people, 'I could've been a great one.'

"Well, yeah, they could've been great, except for one thing. They didn't have any style or charisma. They didn't realize that wrestling is 75 percent sport and 25 percent entertainment, and it's that 25 percent that separates the elite from the also-rans."



Tommy Dreamer powerslams Johnny Hot Body

According to Scott, ECW star Tommy Dreamer possesses the 25 percent that puts him over the top.

"No doubt about it," Scott said. "The only thing I'd be worried about is that he's asking for trouble by hanging out with Luna Vachon and basically treading on Vampire Warrior's ground. They might be setting him up for a fall, but those are the breaks. Everybody has their ups and downs. At some point, you're going to get ambushed. The important thing is that he has the character to bounce back. He's very tough."

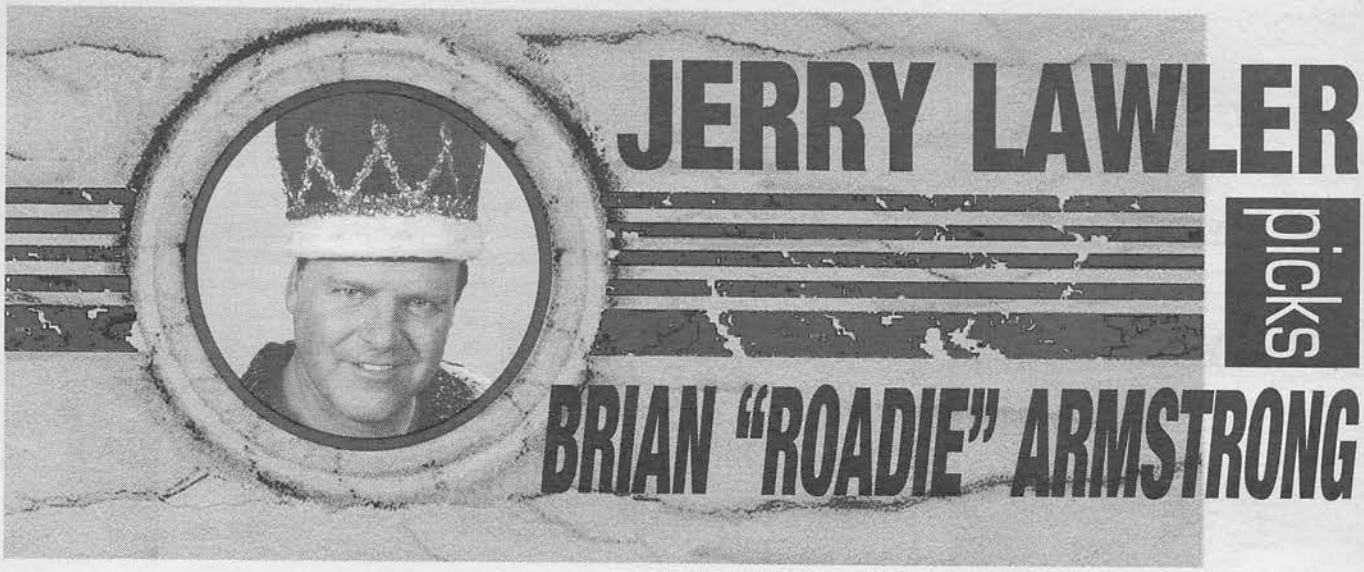
Dreamer is also one of the most charismatic young men in the sport. The ECW crowd was squarely on his side in last year's feud with The Sandman, when Dreamer showed his true character. In a famous "I Quit" match, Sandman went after Dreamer with a rattan cane, frying pans, and other weapons, but Sandman gave up. Dreamer also displayed his pride in "Singapore caning" matches against Sandman, refusing to back down to Sandman and Woman. And the cheers for Dreamer during his bouts with Raven are among the loudest ever heard at ECW Arena.

"I didn't see those matches with Sandman, but I heard about them, and it doesn't surprise me," Steiner said. "Some people have said he's too tough for his own good, but I don't think there's any such thing in wrestling. In this sport, it's the person with the highest breaking point that gets the furthest."

That could be Dreamer who, not surprisingly, was pleased but not overwhelmed by Steiner's comments.

"It's good that people think of me that way, but it's not going to get me anywhere," he said. "I still have a lot of work to do before I reach all of my goals in this sport. I can't start feeling too good about myself."

Maybe so. Nonetheless, there are many reasons to feel good about Tommy Dreamer.



JERRY LAWLER picks BRIAN "ROADIE" ARMSTRONG

THAT JEFF JARRETT has a lot of nerve! Don't get me wrong, because he's a great wrestler, but I don't know where he got off blaming The Roadie for him losing the WWF Intercontinental title at In Your House II. First off, if not for Jarrett's interference, Roadie might be King of the Ring right now, and second off, when Jarrett and Roadie lost that handicap match at the first In Your House, who did Razor Ramon pin? Jarrett, that's who. The veteran.

Brian "The Roadie" Armstrong was displaying all the signs of greatness in the WWF, and it's a damn shame that he's spending his wrestling time in Smoky Mountain. I never thought that Armstrong family had much moxie. Roadie's the only one with style and heart ... and a great sense of humor, too!

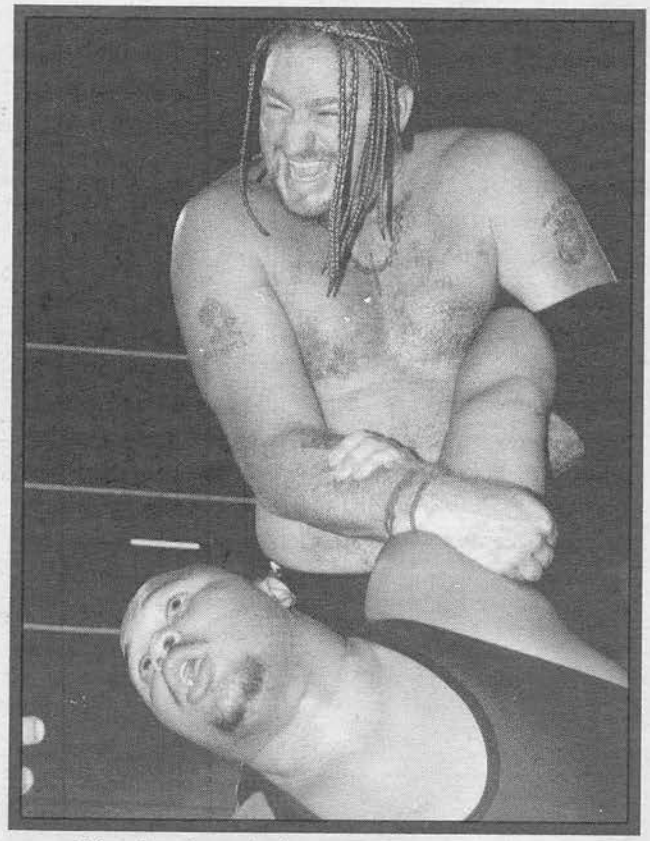
Maybe the WWF has seen the last of Roadie, but I don't think wrestling fans have. I'll tell you why: Yeah, Roadie's tough, and he's a good wrestler, but what sets him apart is that he'll do anything to win. To him, the only thing worse than losing is losing without doing everything in your power to win a match, even if it's lying, cheating, and stealing. Think he cares?

And how about the way he pinned The Kid after that piledriver from the second rope at In Your House II? Sure, The Kid nearly broke his neck on that one, but what if Roadie missed? He could've been hurt, too, but he didn't even consider the consequences. When have you ever seen an Armstrong do that?

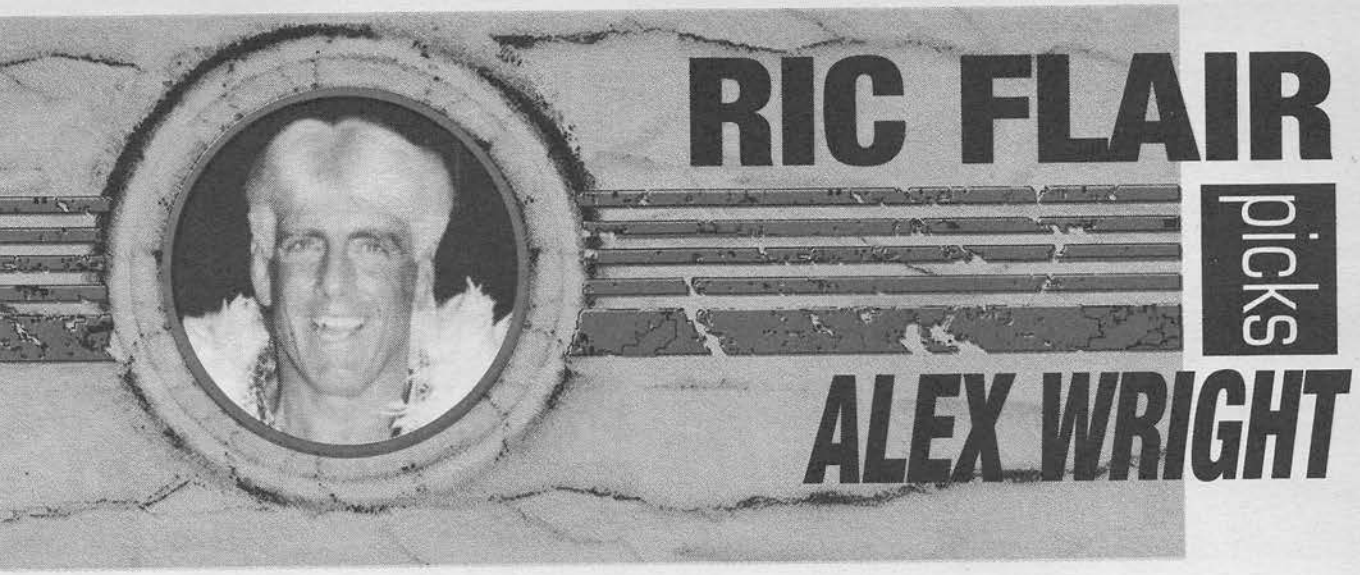
Maybe he was lip-synching for Jarrett, maybe he wasn't, but there's just another case of Roadie doing whatever's necessary to get the job done. You usually don't even see that in veteran wrestlers, so when you see it in a kid, that's something to think about.

Even Jarrett knew it. You could tell. Jarrett was a little afraid of The Roadie and didn't know what to do about him, so there's a matchup you might never see again ever in your life. As for The Roadie, I don't know what's going to happen next, because he'll have to make some decisions ... and the right ones, too. The worst thing he could do is let his family control him, because then he'll just wind up becoming a runner-up like the rest of them.

But if Roadie keeps doing what he's been doing, then you're really going to see something special.



Brian Armstrong locks an armbar on D-Lo Brown



RIC FLAIR picks ALEX WRIGHT

A LOT OF people might say, "'Nature Boy,' you just pinned Alex Wright one-two-three in the middle of the ring with no trouble at all, so how can you call him a superstar of tomorrow?" My answer is that when I was a kid, I lost some matches, too, and if somebody back then tossed me into the ring with someone like the Ric Flair of today, I would have lost, too.

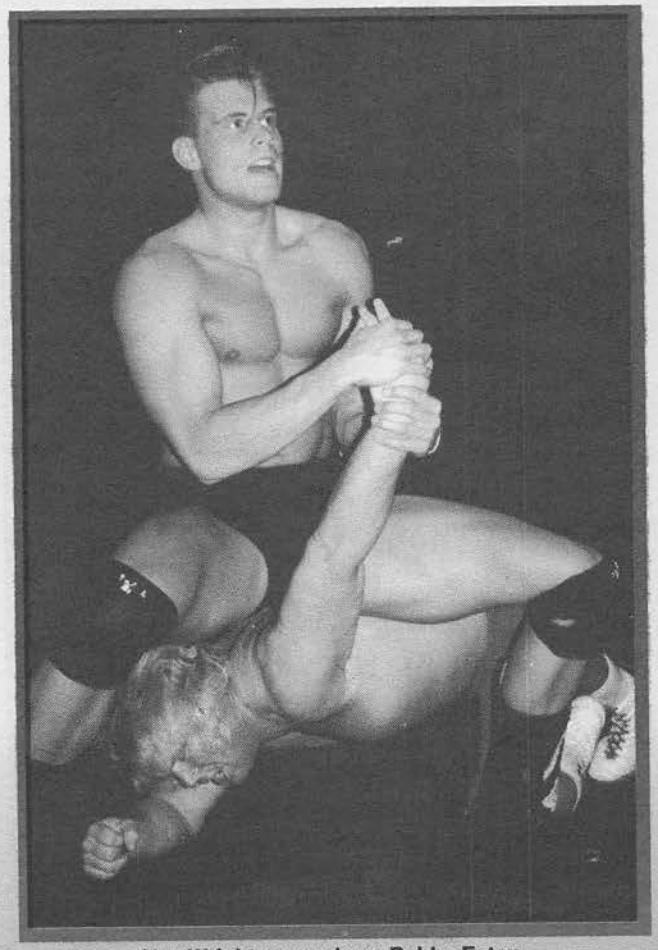
I knew Wright might be something special after Slamboree '95. Arn Anderson pinned him to keep the TV title, and when he got back to the dressing room, Arn said to me, "'Nature Boy,' that kid is tough. He means business. I don't know if he has the heart or the killer instinct, but he's got all the physical tools to be a great one. Maybe he just needs a little help."

About a month later, I made a special point to watch Wright's match against Brian Pillman at The Great American Bash, and I realized right away that "Double-A" was right: Wright had what it takes, but maybe he needs that little something extra. I'll tell you what it is: He's too nice and he cares too much about what the fans, especially the women, think about him.

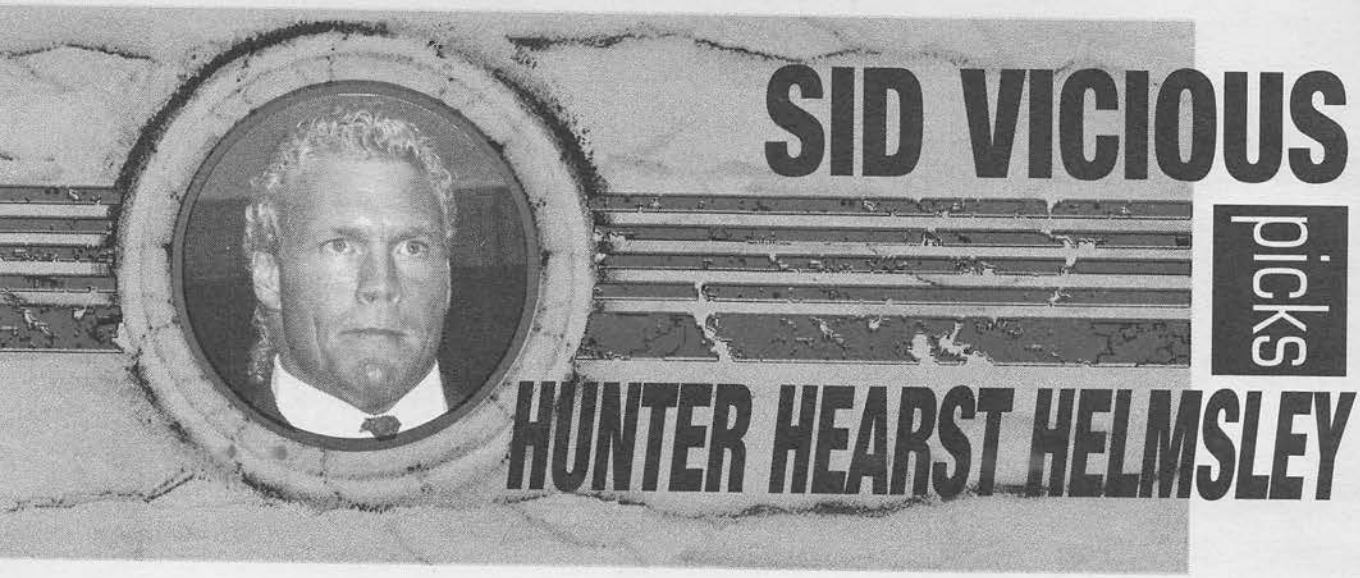
Well, let me tell you something, Wright: The fans don't matter, and the women like a man with a few rough edges. When was the last time you saw any woman hanging all over Hogan?

Wright has the moves, the stamina, the skills, and the intelligence. In that way, he reminds me a little of myself because he cares about the finer points of wrestling, the art of the ring. But you'll never see him going for the jugular in a match. I'd love to wipe that stupid smile off his face. It's a good thing he stopped dancing in the ring. It was enough to make you sick. When you get into that ring, you have to show the eyes of a winner. There's no time for dancing.

The future is in his hands. You know, they say Germans can be the toughest people in the world. Wright has to show a little of his German heritage by getting into the ring and really showing he means business. Forget the fans, forget the promoters, just go in there and do everything necessary to win every match. If he does that, he has a great future. If he doesn't, he becomes just another loser who could've been something.



Alex Wright wears down Bobby Eaton

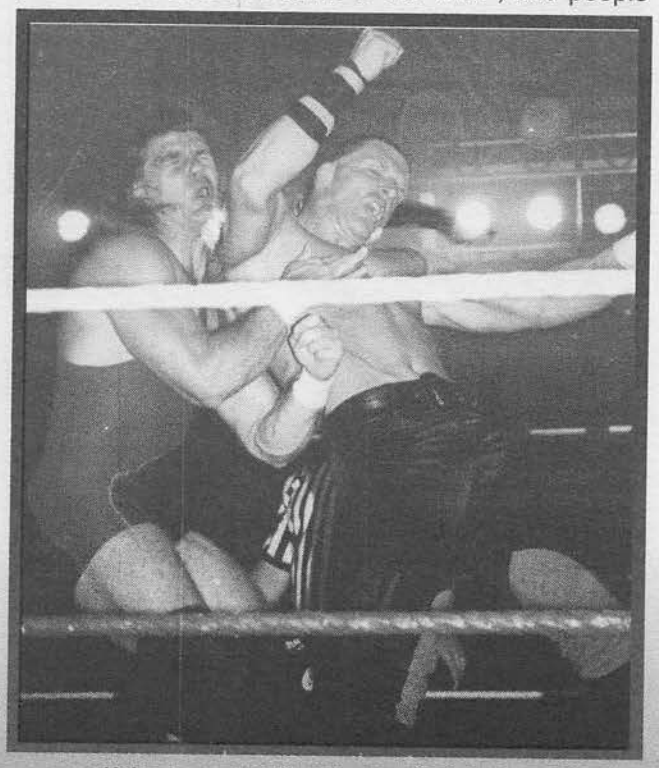


SID VICIOUS picks HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY

WHEN SID VICIOUS looks at Hunter Hearst Helmsley, he sees a person who isn't divulging the true identity of the man inside.

"If you have the heart of a killer, you'd better have the right face to back it up, because there's nothing worse than a wrestler who always shows his hand," Vicious said. "Keep people wondering, make them think you're something you're not, and you've won the first battle and a lot more.

"Hunter Hearst Helmsley is a lot like me," Vicious added. "He's formed a lot of misconceptions in people's minds since he came to the WWF, and people are totally misjudging him. I've heard people say he has the face of a lover, but if you ask me, he's got the heart of a killer. A cold-blooded killer."



Helmsley rocks Mike Khoury with an elbow

Although Helmsley's accomplishments in the WWF have been modest, they're more impressive when you look at them in a different light. The WWF brass said to him, "Helmsley, you're gonna have to work your way up from the bottom," and that's just what he has done. He has beaten Doink the Clown, Barry Horowitz, Duke Droese, and a whole bunch of others, but it's not the wins that are impressive, it's the way he's just steamrolled over all of his opponents.

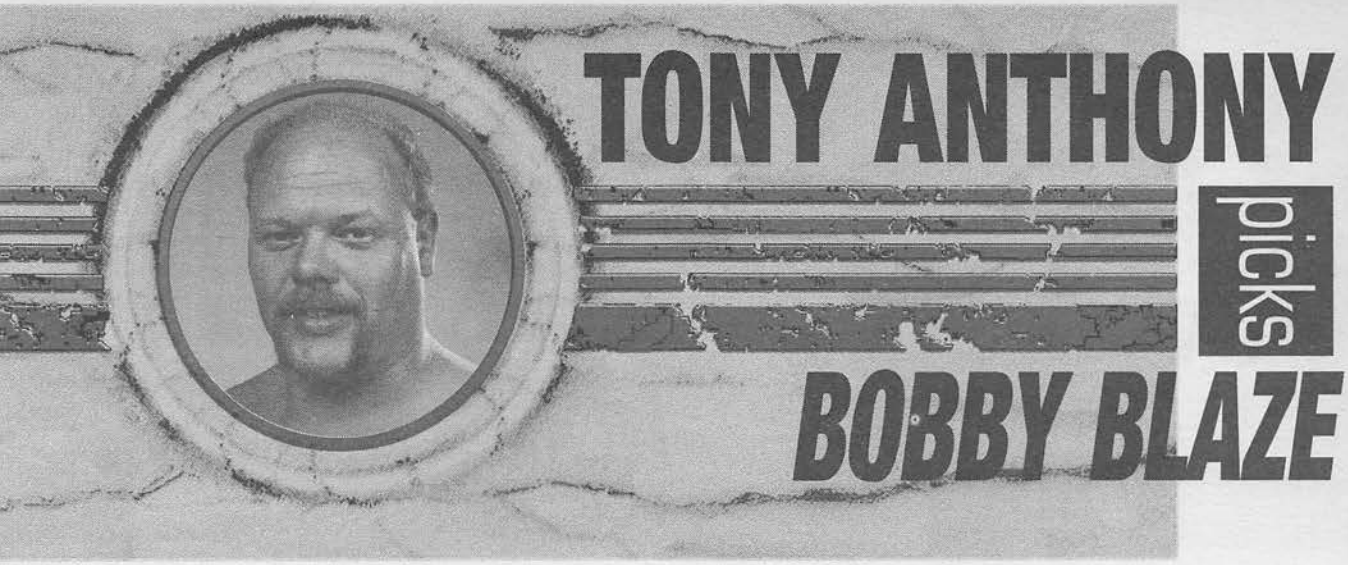
"I saw him in another federation [WCW, as Jean-Paul LeVeque], where he was wrestling against men he shouldn't have been up against at this stage of his career, but he did well," Vicious said. "Then people sold him short and he came to the WWF, and this is where we're really going to see what he's made of."

The key, the way Vicious sees it, is that Helmsley is cocky, but that veneer suddenly disappears when he reveals his killer instinct. All the time, however, he is nonchalantly destroying another opponent.

"I look at Helmsley and see a man who doesn't give a damn about nobody, doesn't care who he hurts," Vicious said. "He's selfish and ruthless."

Remind you of anybody? Although Helmsley doesn't come close to Vicious in sheer size, muscle, or power, he goes about his business in much the same way ... with a touch of finesse. Rather than being like a Mack Truck that flattens a helpless animal in the middle of the road, Helmsley is more like a Porsche barreling down the highway, striking the poor creature ... and getting exactly the same result.

According to Vicious, a tuneup is all Helmsley needs.



TONY ANTHONY picks BOBBY BLAZE

THE PACKAGE WOULD be complete if Bobby Blaze suddenly stood up and declared that he wasn't actually where he said he was from all along and didn't like the things he said he liked. That would make him the man "Dirty White Boy" Tony Anthony sees him to be: a clone of himself. Remember a few years ago, when Anthony, a native of Bucksnort, Tennessee, renounced the South, insisting he was really from New York City?

Well, Blaze is not exactly a clone, but he's pretty darn close, if you listen to Anthony.

"He's tough, he's fast, and he's hungry," said Anthony, listing qualities that about a hundred young wrestlers each year claim to have. "He'll do anything to win, and he's starting the hard way."

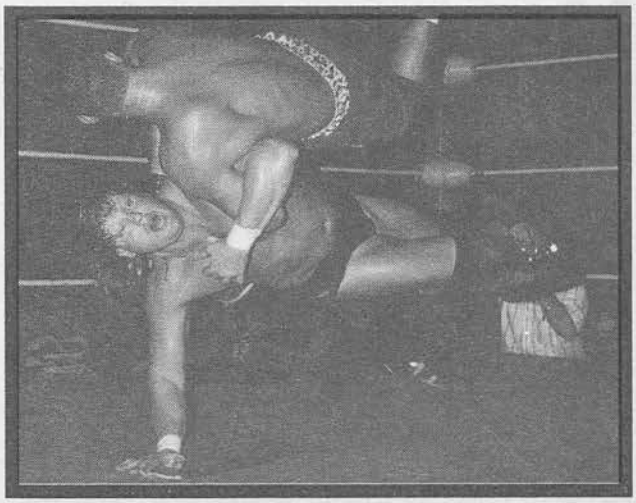
Blaze is more of a scientific wrestler than a win-at-all-costs brawler, but Anthony likes him anyway. Sometimes we see in others the qualities we'd most like to have for ourselves.

Bobby Blaze doesn't have a "Dirty White Girl." He's not dirty, but he's white, and he's a boy. He is fast, tough, and hungry, and he. Blaze knows the meaning of the words takedown, armdrag, and dropkick.

"Just the basics," Blaze said. "You start with the building blocks and work your way up from there. Little by little, you have all the tools you need to be a champion. That's what I'm working on right now."

It's a long road, as Anthony discovered in several successful bids for the SMW heavyweight title; Blaze, who held the SMW belt for a few months earlier this year, has had some help along the way.

What could be better for a young wrestler, for example, than to wrestle Dan Severn on a major card? Blaze did it and lost by submission to the former Ultimate Fight and current NWA champion. Severn was impressed.



Blaze armdrags Wolfie D

"I can see where he'll be a good one, but there's a ways to go yet," Severn said. "I've only seen him a few times, and what I've seen has been good. A lot of other wrestlers think he's one of the top young stars in this sport. I'd agree with that—he gave me a real challenge. He made me think."

Robert Gibson teamed with Blaze in a match against PG-13. Although Gibson refused to compare Blaze to longtime partner Rick Morton, he felt comfortable teaming with Blaze and saw signs of promise.

"He's confident, and he really believes he belongs in that ring with anybody," Gibson said. "He just knows what he wants. Now it's a matter of going out and getting it."

Said Anthony: "A hungry man goes a long way in this sport. Look at me. Look at Blaze, too!"

LUNA VACHON picks MADD MAXXINE

WE REALIZED OUR mistake the moment we asked Luna Vachon to make her choice for the top female star of tomorrow. Vachon gazed at our reporter with a look that could kill and, believe us, Luna's looks *can* kill.

"What's wrong with me? What am I, an old hag?" Vachon screeched.

Well, since you asked ...

"I know what you're saying," Vachon continued, spitting more than she talked. "You're saying I'm yesterday's news just because I've already had a go-round. Well, I'll show you."

It took us about 45 minutes to calm down loony Luna and explain to her that while we hadn't discarded her as yesterday's news, today's trash heap, what we had in mind for this special section were wrestlers who hadn't quite made their mark on the sport. Rookies, up-and-comers, wrestlers who hadn't been introduced into the mainstream. Not like Luna, who has appeared on WWF pay-per-view events.

"You'd better be telling the truth," Vachon yelled, her throat muscles straining. "Because if you're not, there'll be hell to pay."

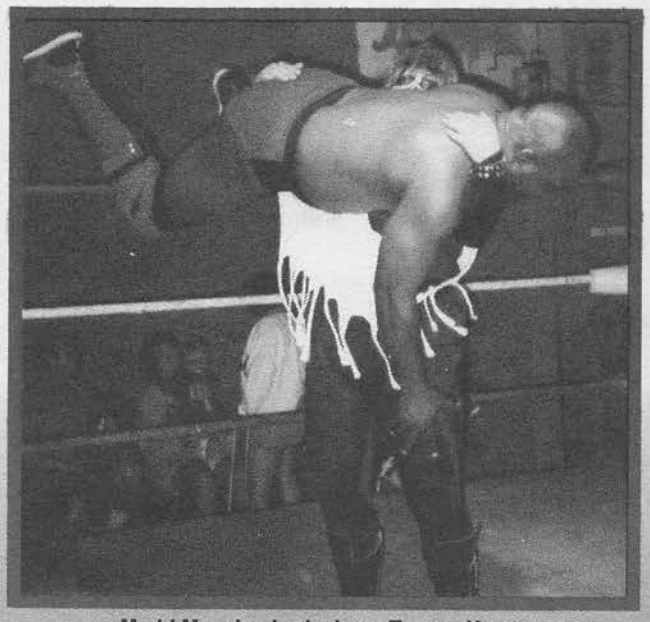
Having finally convinced Vachon that our aim was true, we listened as she proceeded to wax poetic about one of the top female stars in North America ... and, in fact, one of the top all-around wrestlers in North Carolina's Pro Wrestling Federation.

"Let me tell you something, my buddy Madd Maxxine can kick anyone's butt, man or woman, it doesn't matter," Vachon swore. "She's already embarrassed a whole bunch of so-called men and except for me, she's the best female wrestler in the world. I'm the only one who can match her. Madd Maxxine's a 200-pound hellraiser."

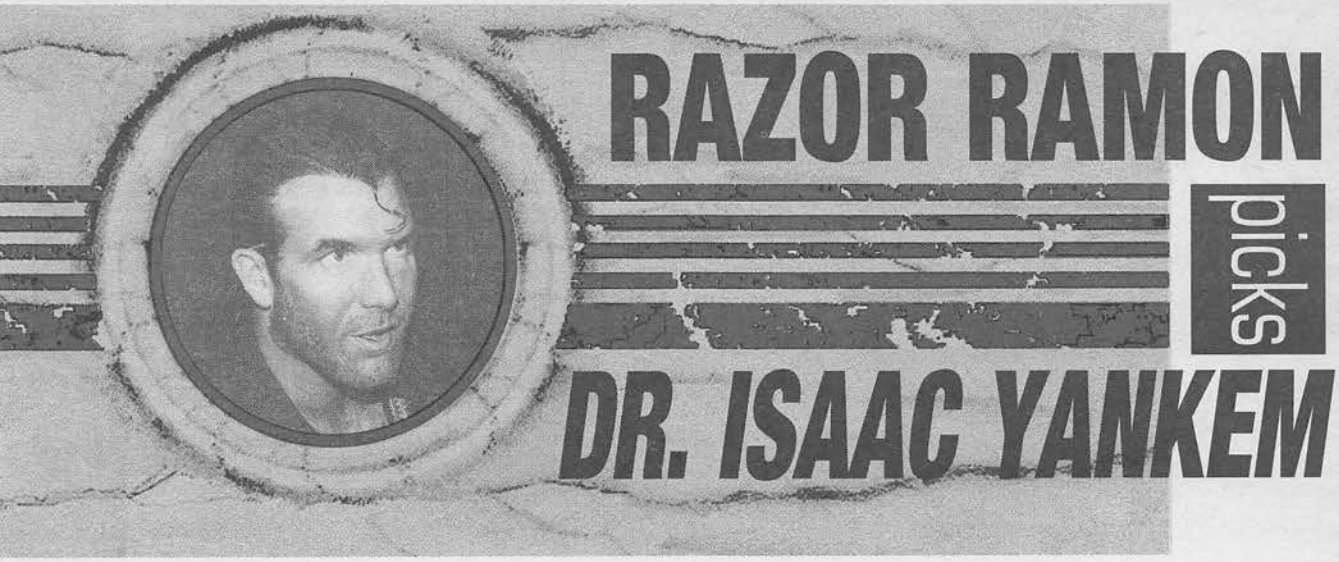
Indeed, Maxxine already has to her credit victories over PWF male wrestlers Tyrone Knox, Flaming Youth, The Ninja, and Masked Maniac, just to name a few. She was one of two females—Vachon was the other—to crack this year's "*PWI* 500" and seems destined for stardom if only because she's so unusual, so fearless, and so tough.

But we suspect that accomplishments aren't the sole reason Vachon favors Madd Maxxine. Maybe opposites attract, but in this case, Vachon likes what she sees in the mirror: a wild, brawling lioness who wears strange makeup and has weirded out more than a few ringside fans.

Could it be that we'll eventually see Luna and Maxxine form a tag team? In the words of Count Floyd, that, boys and girls, would be very scary!



Madd Maxxine bodyslams Tyrone Knox



RAZOR RAMON picks DR. ISAAC YANKEM

EVERYBODY, IT SEEMS, needs an unusual identity in the WWF, and Dr. Isaac Yankem, Razor Ramon's choice as a superstar of tomorrow, has one of the strangest ever: He's a dentist who likes to cause pain by pulling teeth.

But anybody who has wrestled Yankem knows he has many other ways of inflicting punishment.

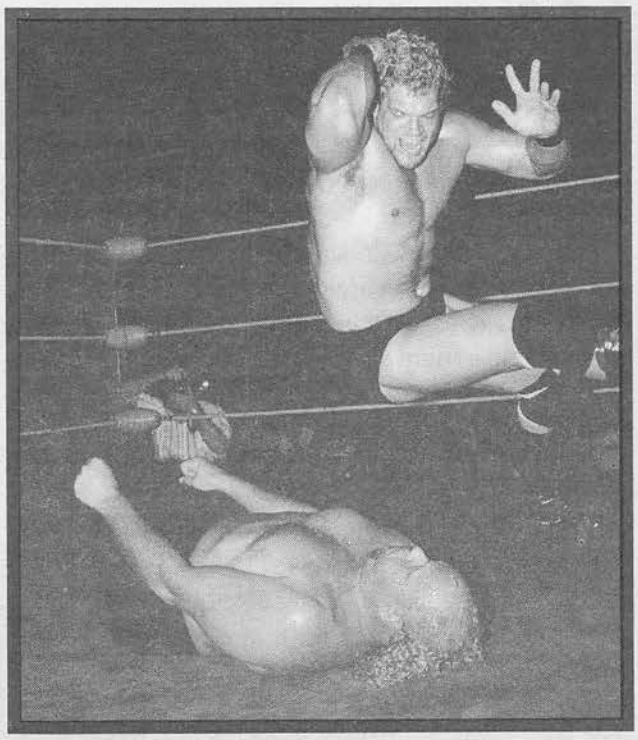
"He's big, tough, and strong," Ramon said. "He has heavy hands and he hits to hurt. I saw that chico wrestling The Undertaker in Smoky Mountain, and I was impressed. He almost beat Undertaker, and Undertaker's been just about unbeatable lately. That showed me something."

Ask Ramon no questions, and he'll tell you no lies. Ask him straight out, and he'll tell you that Yankem is raw and undisciplined. He'll tell you he needs to harness his strength and develop cogent game plans (yes, Ramon said that, though not exactly in those words!), or else he'll become yet another big man who never amounted to anything. The connection to Sid Vicious is undeniable: Yankem could soar in the next few months, or he could flop and disappear.

He's already made headlines as a former Smoky Mountain tag team champ. Then known as Unibomb, he teamed with Al Snow to hold the SMW tag title for three months in 1995. Unibomb learned a lot from Snow, a consummate all-around wrestler, and gained experience while defending the title.

He also learned the hard way that the proper choice of a nickname is very important in wrestling. The more well-known, non-wrestling Unibomber has been terrorizing the United States for years, and some people were insulted by the wrestling Unibomb's use of the name.

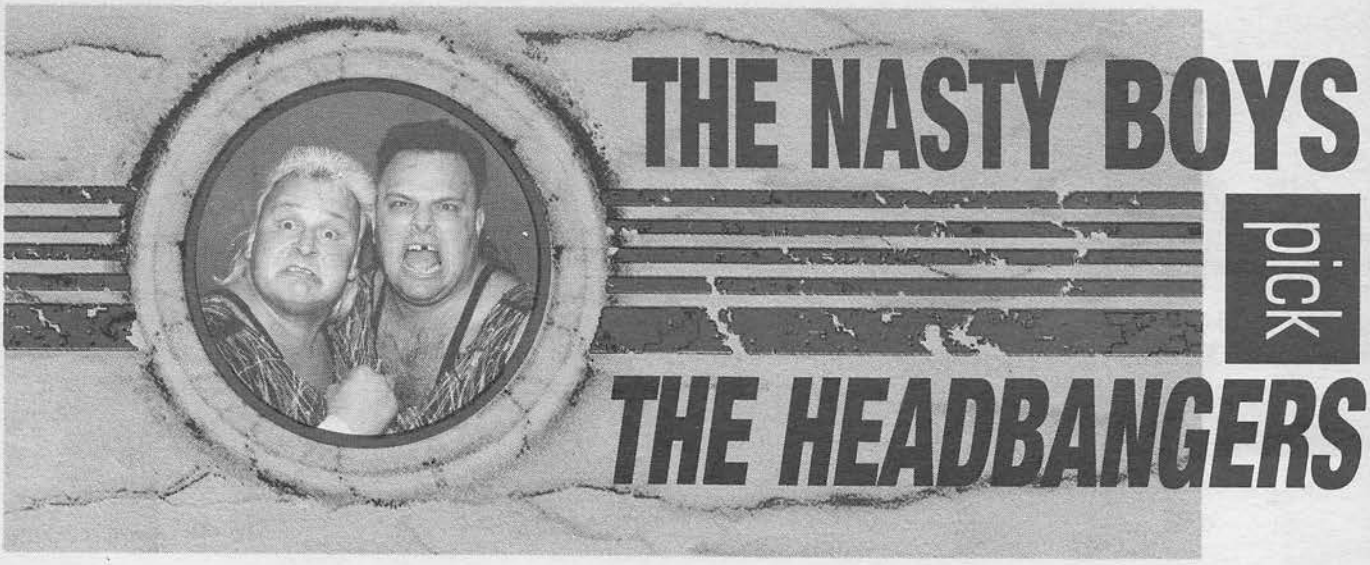
Let's just put it this way: Both Unibombers have caused a lot of people a lot of pain. We'll find out just how tough the wrestling one is when he gets through with a series of matches with Bret Hart.



The good doctor drops an elbow on Tony Anthony

"Let me tell you something, a lot of guys are going to need all the insurance they can get after wrestling Yankem," Ramon said. "I don't like to see him hanging around with Jerry Lawler, but I can see he's hungry, and he wants to win now. He can do it. It's going to take him time to move up in the WWF, but he's going to cause a lot of damage while he's doing it."

There'll be no dulling the pain for Yankem's opponents. Brace yourself.



WE KIND OF knew that when we asked them to pick their superstar tag team of tomorrow, The Nasty Boys weren't going to pick a team they had already wrestled or held a grudge against. Pride is the main motivating factor behind Jerry Sags and Brian Knobs, and reason doesn't always reign.

In this situation, The Nasty Boys agreed on a couple of guys who are very much like themselves. They have never wrestled this team and probably won't for a long time. Then again, their choice was reasonable, because street-smart brawling teams are dominating the tag team wars today, and SMW newcomers The Headbangers are the meanest of the new age mean.

"They don't care about you, they don't care about me, they don't care about nothing but kicking some butt, and that's all they should care about," Sags declared. "The worst thing that could happen to a tag team is to waste time thinking about what other people are saying. We don't, and they don't. If we passed each other in the street, we'd probably fight for a few minutes and then go about our business."

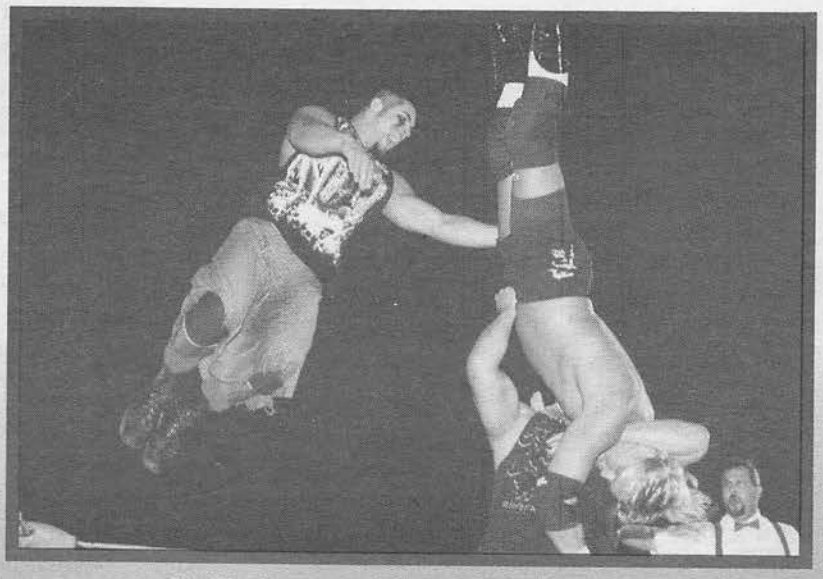
Who would win that impromptu meeting? Who do you think?

"We would," Sags said. "They're not ready for us, and maybe they never will be, but I'll tell you what: If they wrestled us, they wouldn't show no fear."

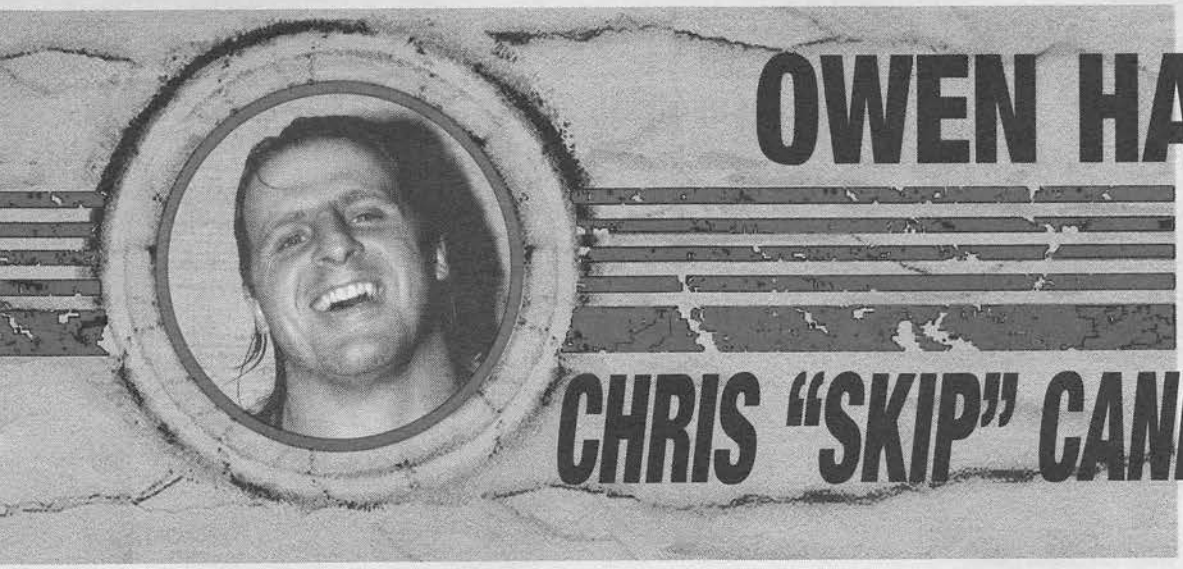
Mosh and Thrasher wrestle like a couple of gang members on the streets and have similar sensibilities. Thrasher wears an earring through his nostril. Both men carry radios, wear Irish kilts, and have never tried to outfinesse anyone. Early losses to Tony Anthony and Tracey Smothers haven't tested their heart because Mosh and Thrasher blame their losses on inexperience.

"They're a little short on confidence, but that'll take care of itself," Knobs said. "The only thing they got to worry about now is getting in their matches and making sure nobody tries to use them, like some manager or something. If they have any questions, they can come running to us. We'll answer them for them. Promoters are going to be afraid of them, but they gotta just keep on plugging away."

Fighting all-out from start to finish, The Headbangers are showing no signs of slowing down or letting anyone stand in their way. The Headbangers are having a ball.



The Headbangers double-team Flash Flanagan



OWEN HART picks CHRIS "SKIP" CANDIDO

OWEN HART POSITIVELY bristles when he hears the phrases "superstar of tomorrow" or "unlimited, untapped potential." Those kinds of labels haunted the second-generation scientific genius from Calgary for years until, he took out his frustrations on his older brother Bret.

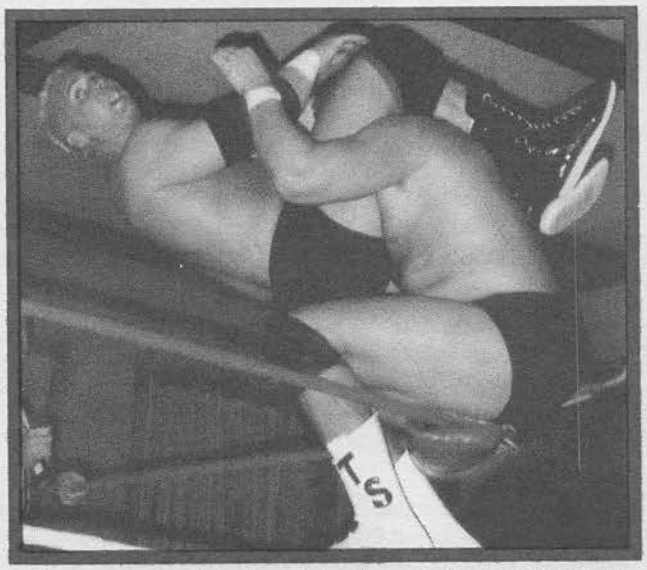
Owen remembers it all. First they called him "The Rocket," then Vince McMahon and friends dressed him up in a Batman outfit and called him The Blue Blazer. They said he had all the markings of greatness and hid his face behind a mask. Owen's first act of frustration was fleeing to Japan, where his aerial skills were properly appreciated and the "potential superstar" tag, while still applicable, was at least lost in the translation.

So you'll forgive Owen if he's a little hesitant to bestow that tag upon another young star who might forever be tainted by the compliment.

"It sounds like a good thing, but it isn't," Owen complained. "All the while you think they're saying something nice, but what they're really doing is placing another burden on your shoulders. People just love building you up and then tearing you down."

Nonetheless, we poked and prodded at Owen, and nagged him a bit, too, because we know Hart knows wrestling and can spot talent from a province away. Finally, Owen broke his cover and admitted that Chris "Skip" Candido, a WWF newcomer, has caught his eye over the past few months.

"The good thing about Skip is that a lot of people don't know much about him, although I guess I blew his cover," Hart said. "He worked his way up through the independents and won some titles, and now he's here with his own manager, Sunny. I think he has a lot more heart than people give him credit for, and if they just give him some time, he will get a chance at winning something in this federation."



Skip goes for the "Frankensteiner" against Tracey Smothers

Candido owns wins over Aldo Montoya, The Kid, and some nice tries against champion Shawn Michaels. Although Michaels would never admit it, Candido gave him a few scares.

Although few WWF fans knew of Candido prior to his arrival, the truth is that he won several junior heavyweight titles, the NWA title, and was a top wrestler in both SMW and ECW prior to making his big-time splash. He is a terrific aerial wrestler, he never hesitates to try new moves, and has a first-rate "Frankensteiner." Although Candido has a reputation as a crybaby, he's a talented wrestler.

"He doesn't remind me of myself at all, but he's a good one," Hart said. "Leave him alone and just watch and wait for a superstar to be born."

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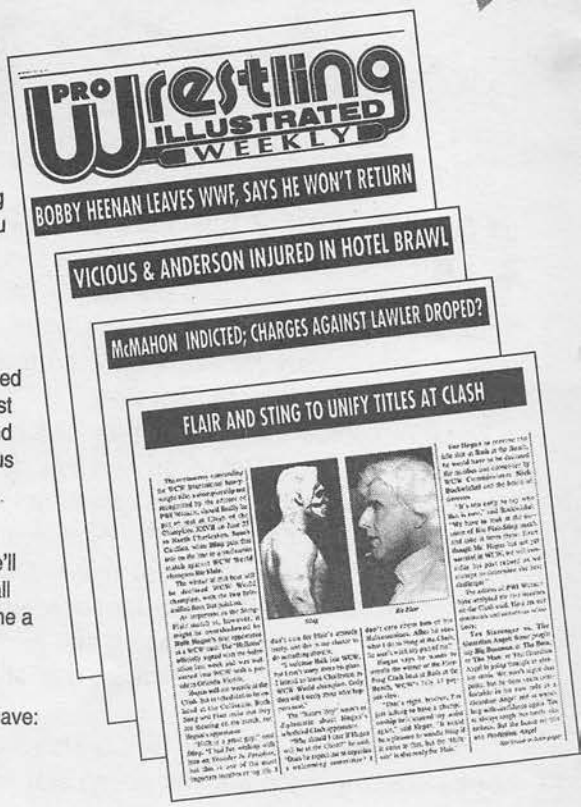

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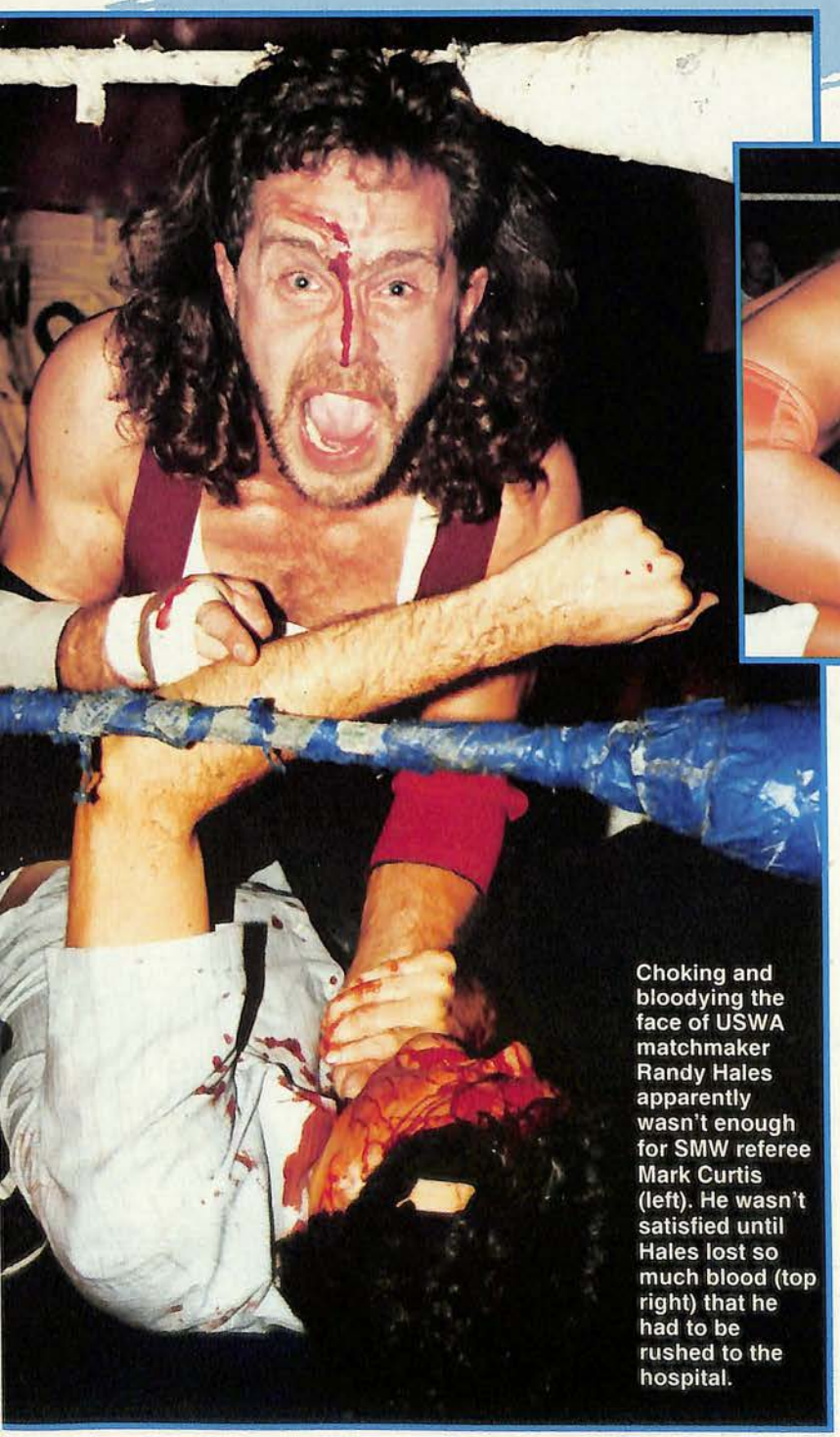
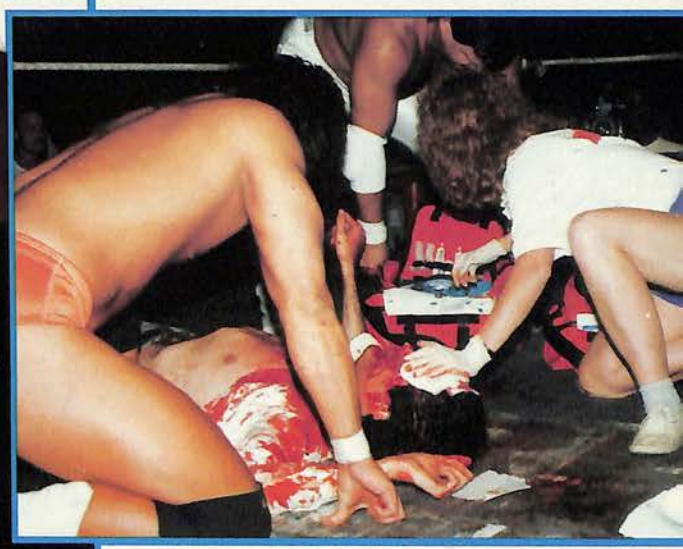
SOUTHERN CIVIL WAR: The USWA-SMW Series Is Out Of Control!





Choking and bloodying the face of USWA matchmaker Randy Hales apparently wasn't enough for SMW referee Mark Curtis (left). He wasn't satisfied until Hales lost so much blood (top right) that he had to be rushed to the hospital.

For those of you who love interfederation matches, we call your attention to Tennessee, where a battle is being waged at both ends of the state. There's no middle ground

By Brandi Mankiewicz

TAKE A WALK down the streets of downtown Memphis, Tennessee, and you'd think you were in the middle of your average American city.

There are men and women of all races, creeds, and religions, blue-collar laborers, and white-collar workers. The streets get busy in the morning, get crowded again around lunch time, and overflow at about 5 p.m.

Talk to some of these people, however, and you'll discover not-so-secret feelings that have welled up over the past few months. They aren't sure how to express their feelings other than with epitaphs and cruel remarks; the provincialism is startling.

Their enemy is Knoxville, Tennessee.

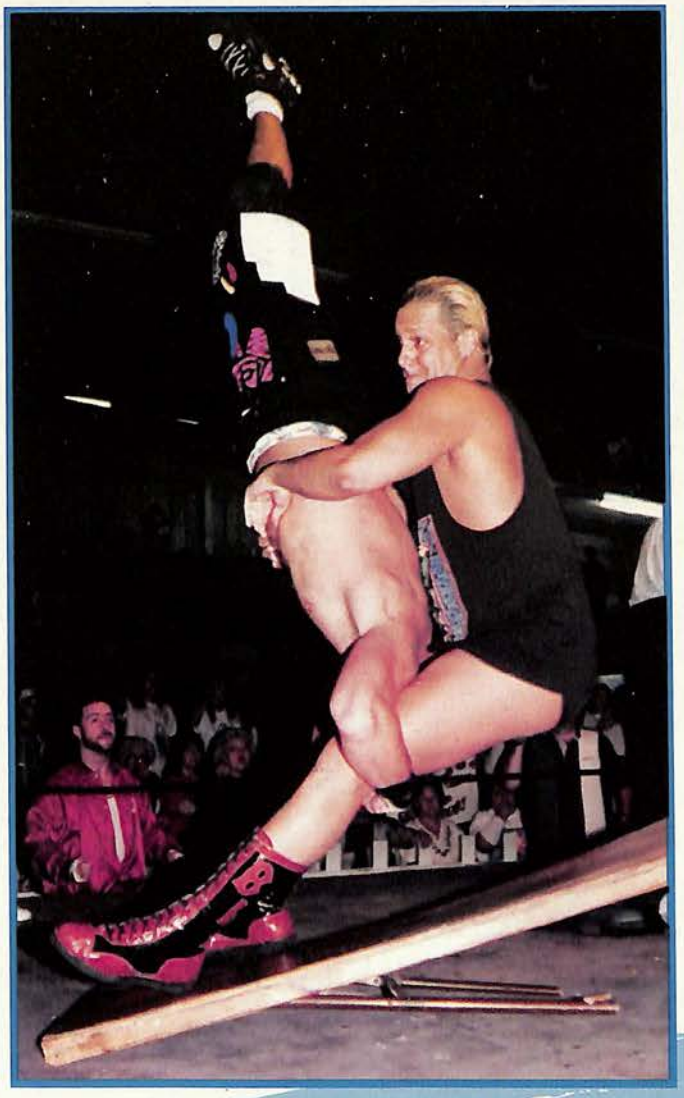
"People from Knoxville are nothing but Smoky Mountain rednecks," said construction worker Jason Cole. "The whole east side of the state's like that. Once you get past Nashville, everything just about falls apart."

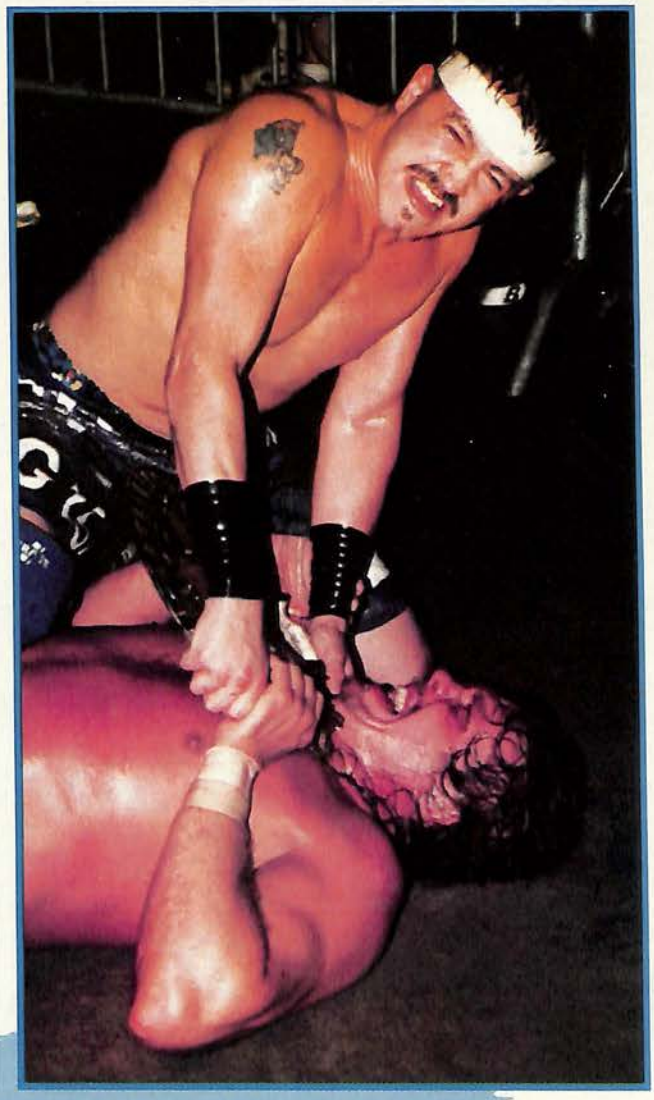
Mr. Cole's sentiments express the feelings of many people in this city, especially the wrestling fans. And if you were to walk into Memphis' famed Mid-South Coliseum on just about any Monday night, you'd find that the peoples' emotions have just about spilled over.

"I don't know what the hell that Mark Curtis is doing here, seeing that he's from that Knoxville area," said Jeannine Fox, sitting at ringside, referring to the Smoky Mountain Wrestling referee. "He's nothing but a cheating hound. You know how they run the law in Knoxville? It's like one of them kangaroo courts."

Cross over to the other side of the state on a Friday or Saturday night and you won't encounter any more tolerance for their western Tennessee brethren. As SMW stars Robert Gibson and Bobby Blaze lose to USWA tag champions PG-13, the crowd loudly accuses PG-13 of cheating throughout the match and, afterward, lets its emotions hang out with a spirited chant belittling the great city of Memphis.

Why is USWA fan favorite/SMW rulebreaker J.C. Ice choking Tracey Smothers (below) and dropkicking chairs into his face (right)? Probably because the normally respectful Smothers has joined his SMW cronies in trashing the entire USWA!





Buddy Landell is representing SMW in this ugly situation. He piledrived Wolfie D on a table not because he hates him personally, but because he's from the USWA (above left). Note that "impartial" referee Curtis is in Landell's corner. The SMW-USWA war began when Wolfie D and J.C. Ice (along with Hales) insulted The Rock 'n' Roll Express and Smoky fans during a trip to eastern Tennessee. Now Wolfie has taken to using his hubcap on Smoky's Terry Gordy (above right).

War has broken out in the great state of Tennessee, and the residents—and wrestlers—are battling each other! At one recent SMW card in Johnson City, Tennessee, a group of USWA fans had to wait for a police escort before they could leave Freedom Hall.

"I've never seen anything like this," said Terry Gordy. "It's a scream! The wrestlers hate each other, the promoters and the referees hate each other, and especially the fans hate each other. Man, I'd hate to walk in downtown Knoxville wearing a shirt that says Memphis on the front."

That's quite a comment coming from Gordy, who has taken far worse risks in his long wrestling career. But whether or not he meant what he said, Gordy's comment points out the intensity of this feud between west Tennessee, war headquarters in Memphis, and east Tennessee, war headquarters in Knoxville.

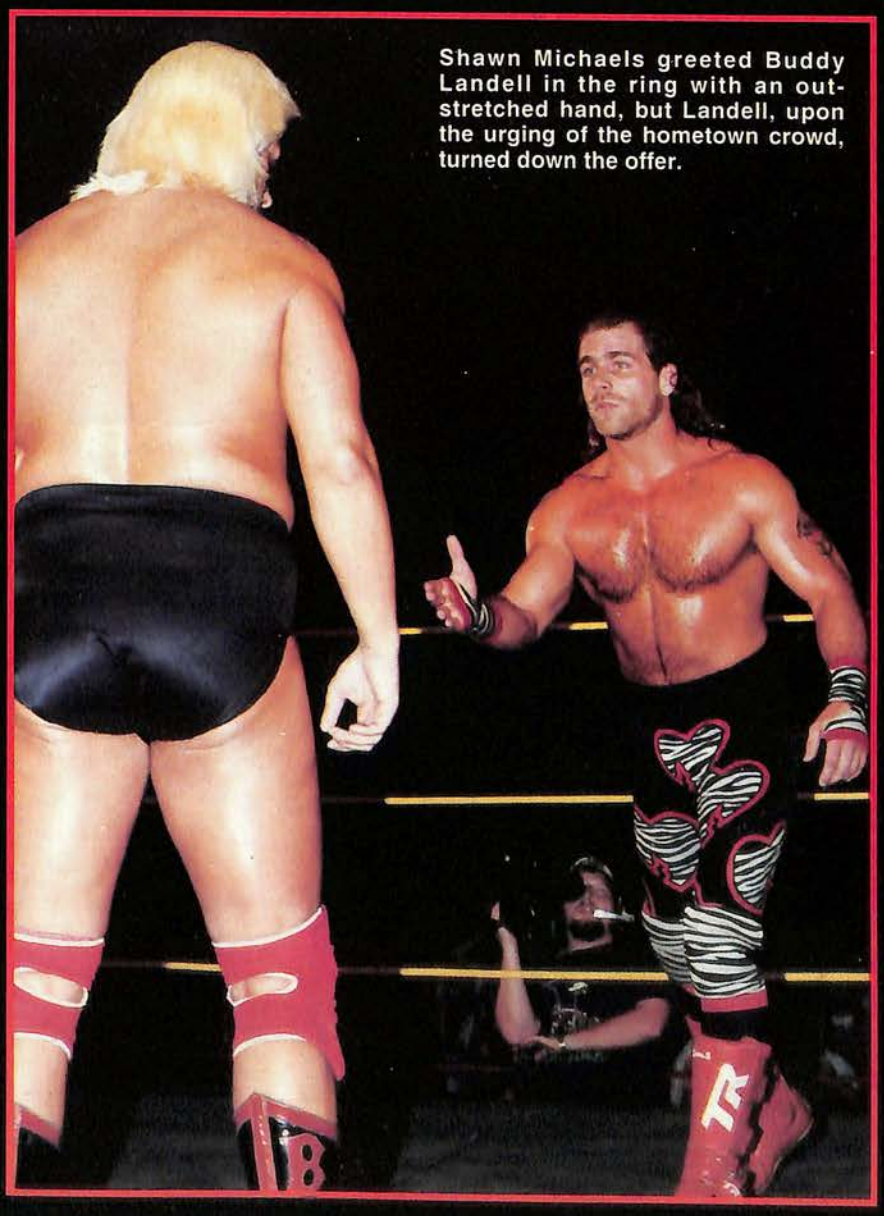
What do the people of central Tennessee think about this?

"I think they're both crazy," said Clark Spencer, a wrestling fan who owns a shoe store in Nashville. "You know what? I think they oughta calm down and get a life!"

Maybe so, because life in Knoxville and Memphis is revolving around these Monday and Saturday night battles. The war started this summer when USWA matchmaker Randy Hales brought PG-13 to Smoky Mountain for a series of matches with The Rock 'n' Roll Express. What should have been a classic series turned ugly when Hales publicly badmouthed SMW wrestlers and fans.

(Continued on page 76)

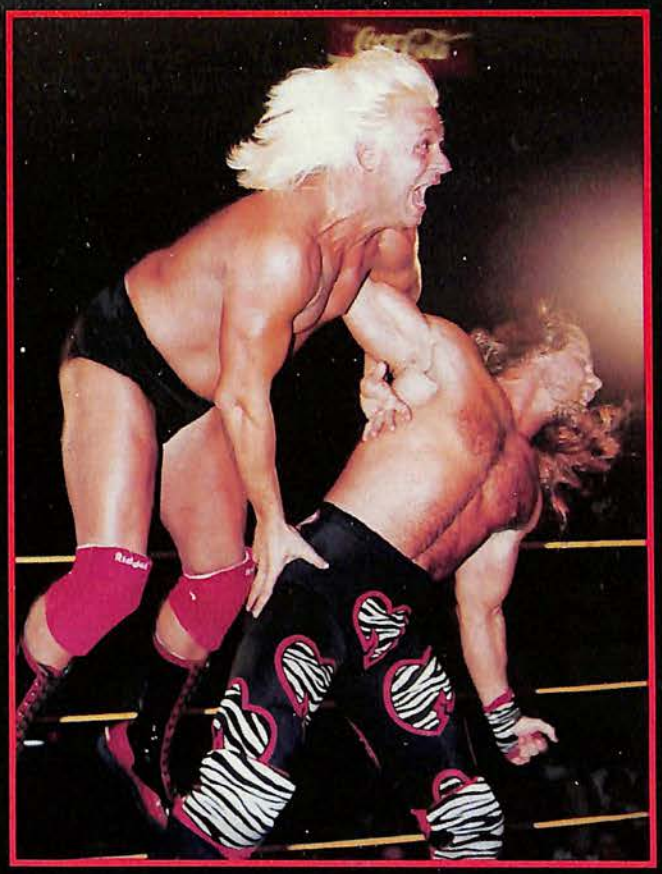
SHAWN MICHAELS BATTLES THE "NATURE BOY" ... KINDA!



Shawn Michaels greeted Buddy Landell in the ring with an outstretched hand, but Landell, upon the urging of the hometown crowd, turned down the offer.

This summer, Shawn Michaels finally received his long-awaited opportunity to wrestle the legendary "Nature Boy." But Ric Flair was resting comfortably at home at the time

Photos by Bill Apter



Though it might look like Michaels had his way throughout the match, taking Landell down with hiptosses (far left) and "Frankensteiners" (left), this "Nature Boy" actually gave him a great match.

By Steve Anderson

WE LIVE FOR the dream match. Fans, journalists, and promoters have speculated about matchups between champions of different tag teams, members of a tag team, or wrestlers with similar looks and styles. Occasionally our dreams come true. Hogan vs. Flair. Road Warriors vs. Demolition. Expectations were high ... and the feuds never lived up to our fantasies.

Shawn Michaels vs. "Nature Boy" Ric Flair.

This match has been bandied about in wrestling circles for some time. Since his split with Marty Jannetty, Shawn Michaels has evolved as, pound-for-pound, one of the best singles wrestlers in the history of the sport. Three Intercontinental titles and consistent top 10 rankings in this and other magazines tell the story. But when success comes your way, you inevitably become the "next something" ... or the "next someone."

There have been numerous next Hulk Hogans and next Andre the Giants. But only one has been given the distinction of the next Ric Flair and has lived up to it. That man is Michaels.

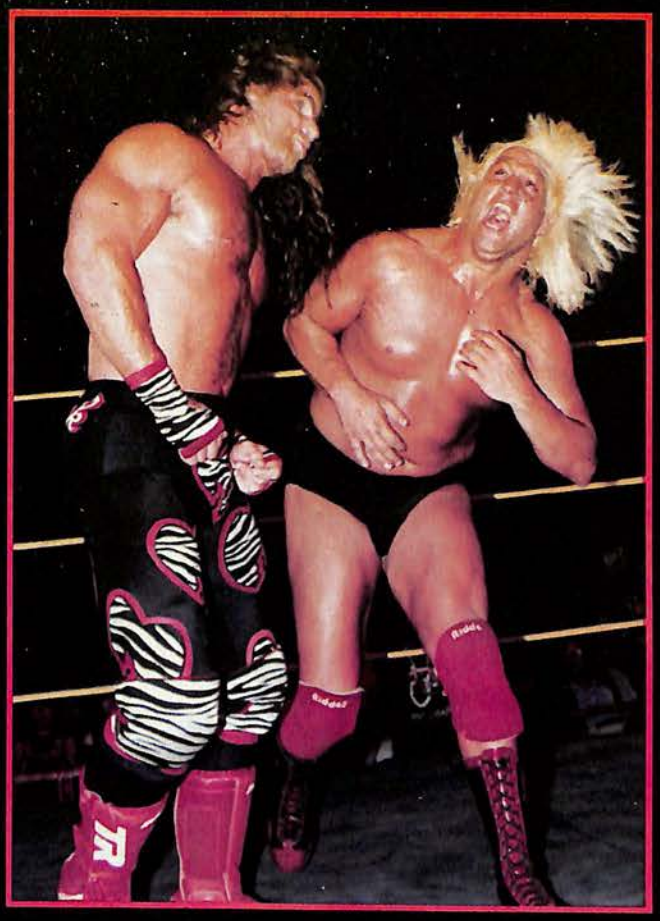
The dream match between these two has actually already occurred. Early in Flair's WWF tenure and late in Michaels' career as one of The Rockers, the two met in a singles match, with Flair pinning Michaels in a technical masterpiece. Ironically, by beating Michaels, Flair in effect created his own prodigy. On that day, even in defeat, Shawn Michaels had come into his own.

"The match changed Shawn—it made him what he is today," recalled former tag partner Marty Jannetty. "He didn't hate Flair for beating him. He admired him in a lot of ways. He wasn't a beaten man as much as he was a grateful one. He learned something in that bout."

Like Batman dropping the Joker into a vat of acid, Ric Flair unintentionally created the modern-day Shawn Michaels, a flashy, womanizing, loudmouthed show-off. If Ric Flair were a painter rather than a wrestler, one could say he created a self-portrait.

As Michaels grew as a singles wrestler, his technical wizardry and interview style had fans pegging him as a "young Ric Flair." Fans began to wonder what would happen if *this* Shawn Michaels met Ric Flair.

Michaels wondered about it, too. "I've wanted the 'Nature Boy' since that one fateful match,"



The "Heartbreak Kid" was really hurting after Landell connected with a low blow. If he ever does face Flair, Michaels better be prepared to defend himself against similar tactics.

Michaels once reflected. "And I will do anything to call him out. To get him in the ring with the 'Heartbreak Kid.' I don't care where or when."

And on August 4, 1995, in Knoxville, Tennessee, Shawn Michaels wrestled and soundly and cleanly defeated the "Nature Boy" on a Smoky Mountain Wrestling card. That "Nature Boy" was, unfortunately, Buddy Landell.

It was not a case of mistaken identity. Michaels knew which "Nature Boy" he was going to be wrestling. In today's era of competition between the WWF and WCW, Michaels vs. Flair has no chance of happening. But with the WWF's talent exchange with SMW, Michaels had access to at least one "Nature Boy."

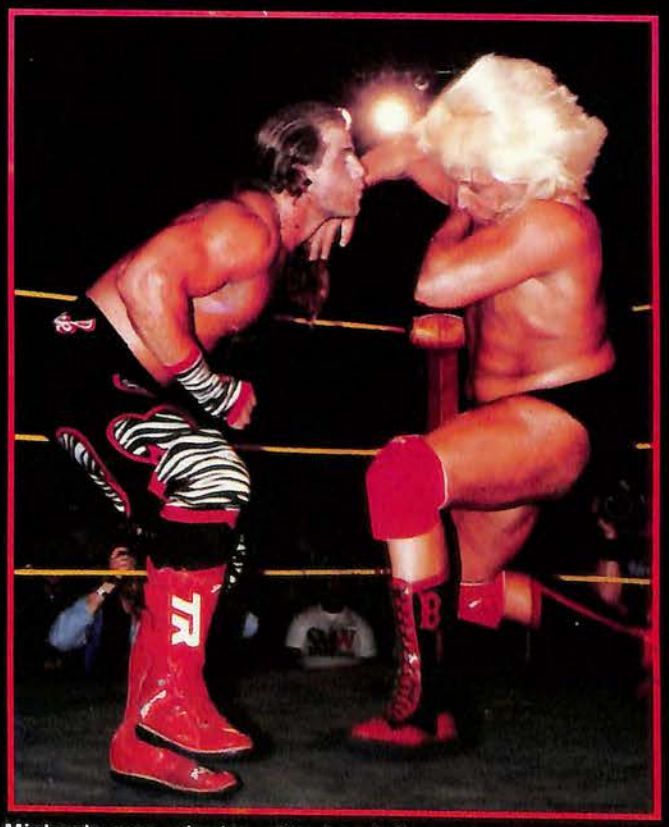
"This was his chance to call Flair out by beating his namesake," said Jannetty, who was also on he card.

"If that little pansy is lookin' past me, he's in for a big surprise," ranted Landell. "I earned this moniker. I may not have the name recognition, money, cars, or women that Flair does, but I can match him and his wannabe hold-for-hold any day of the week."

"Shawn's been dropped on his head too much by Sid," interjected his manager at the time, Jim Cornette. "Tonight he's gonna wrestle Buddy Landell. But, brother, he's also wrestling with demons. Shawn Michaels is in the shadow of Flair. The one and only 'Nature Boy' Buddy Landell casts shadows. And those shadows extend to both Stamford, Connecticut, and Atlanta."

Despite his newfound popularity, Shawn Michaels was a hated man on that night in Tennessee. The Knoxville crowd was completely behind Landell, their hometown hero. They wanted him to quickly dispose of the outsider. Despite Michaels' predictions and everything everyone said about this being a mismatch in Shawn's favor, Landell proved to be solid competition. He had counters for Michaels' counters. And on more than one occasion, he came close to pinning the "Heartbreak Kid." They traded holds and exchanged punches evenly.

But Landell lost any momentum he might have gained after Cornette ran in while referee Mark



Michaels was wincing after Landell caught him with one perfectly placed right hand to the chin. Maybe he underestimated this "Nature Boy" while obsessing over Mr. Flair.

Curtis was distracted. Cornette lobbed his infamous tennis racket toward Landell so he could get the "ace" on Michaels. Curtis, however, intercepted the pass and caught the weapon. With Landell confused and distracted, Michaels rolled up the "Nature Boy" for the pin and the win.

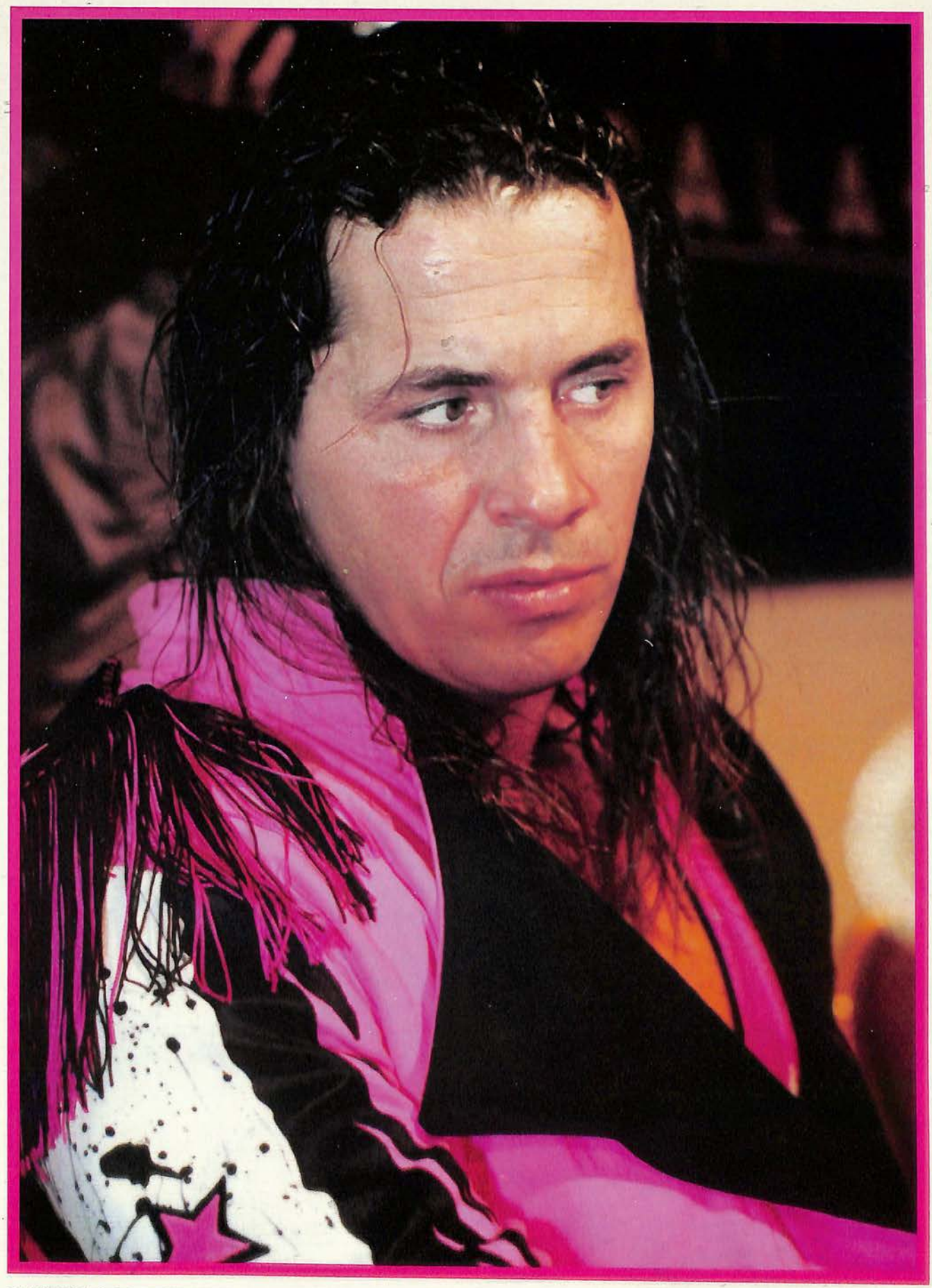
"This is only the beginning," said one of Michaels' traveling sparring partners who identified himself only as "Max." "That's 'Heartbreak Kid' one and 'Nature Boys' no score. Flair can't hide from wrestling politics. And Flair can't hide from Shawn forever."

If Michaels indeed feels that way, he needs a dose of reality. Unless he or Flair jumps ship to the other's promotion, the chances of this match happening are slim and none. No matter how great Michaels' obsession or Ric Flair's power is, this match will forever live only in the minds of all who follow wrestling.

Michaels wouldn't comment when asked directly about Flair, but Flair wasn't at all hesitant.

"I've wrestled him before and I beat him," he said. "He faced Space Mountain and was turned away. *Whoooooo!* You pass this on to Michaels: The bottom line is that I am and will always be the one and only 'Nature Boy.' Until he proves different to me, Michaels will always be the 'Nature Boy Toy.'" □

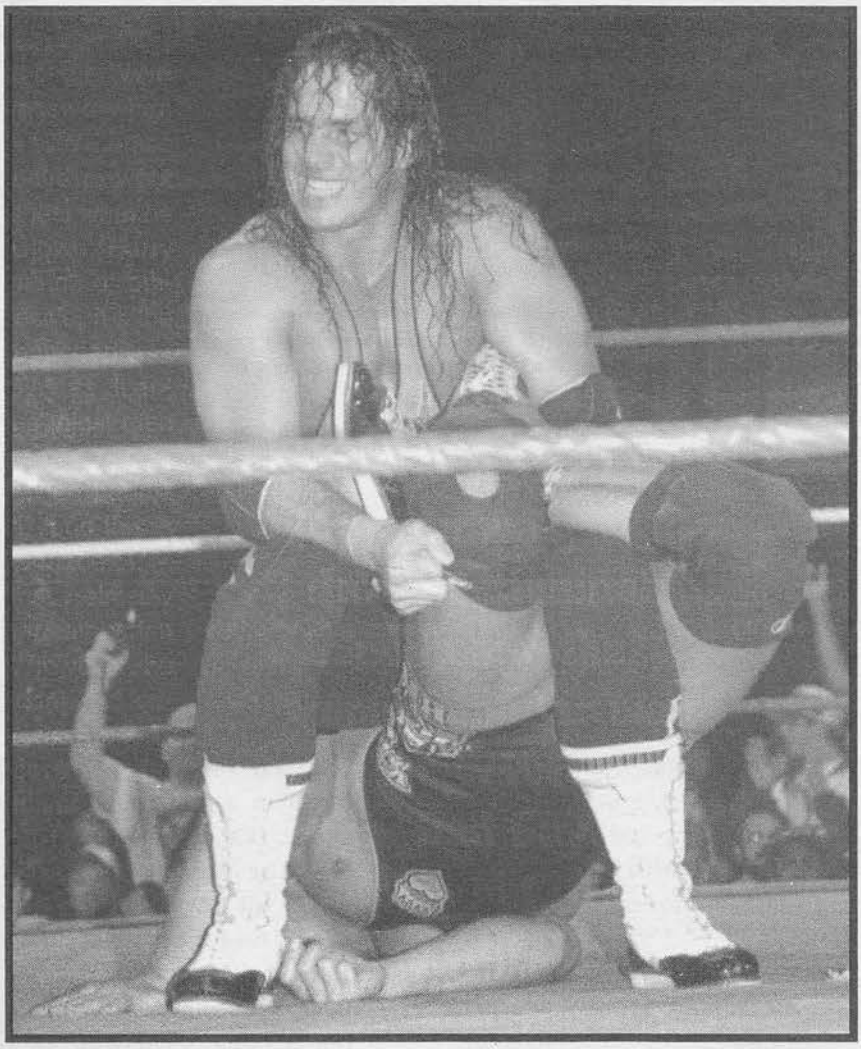
The last time Michaels and Ric Flair faced off in the ring was during the 1992 Royal Rumble, where Shawn rakes Flair's eyes to avoid elimination. Certainly no conclusions could be drawn from that encounter.



SUPERSTAR INTERVIEW

BRET HART

*FOR TWO YEARS, Bret "The Hitman" Hart was not merely king of the WWF, he was king of the entire wrestling world. Although his two WWF World title reigns were separated by a 70-day reign by Hulk Hogan and a nine-month reign by Yokozuna, nothing got in the way of Hart and his two straight number-one rankings in the "**Pro Wrestling Illustrated** 500," the annual listing of the top 500 wrestlers in the world.*

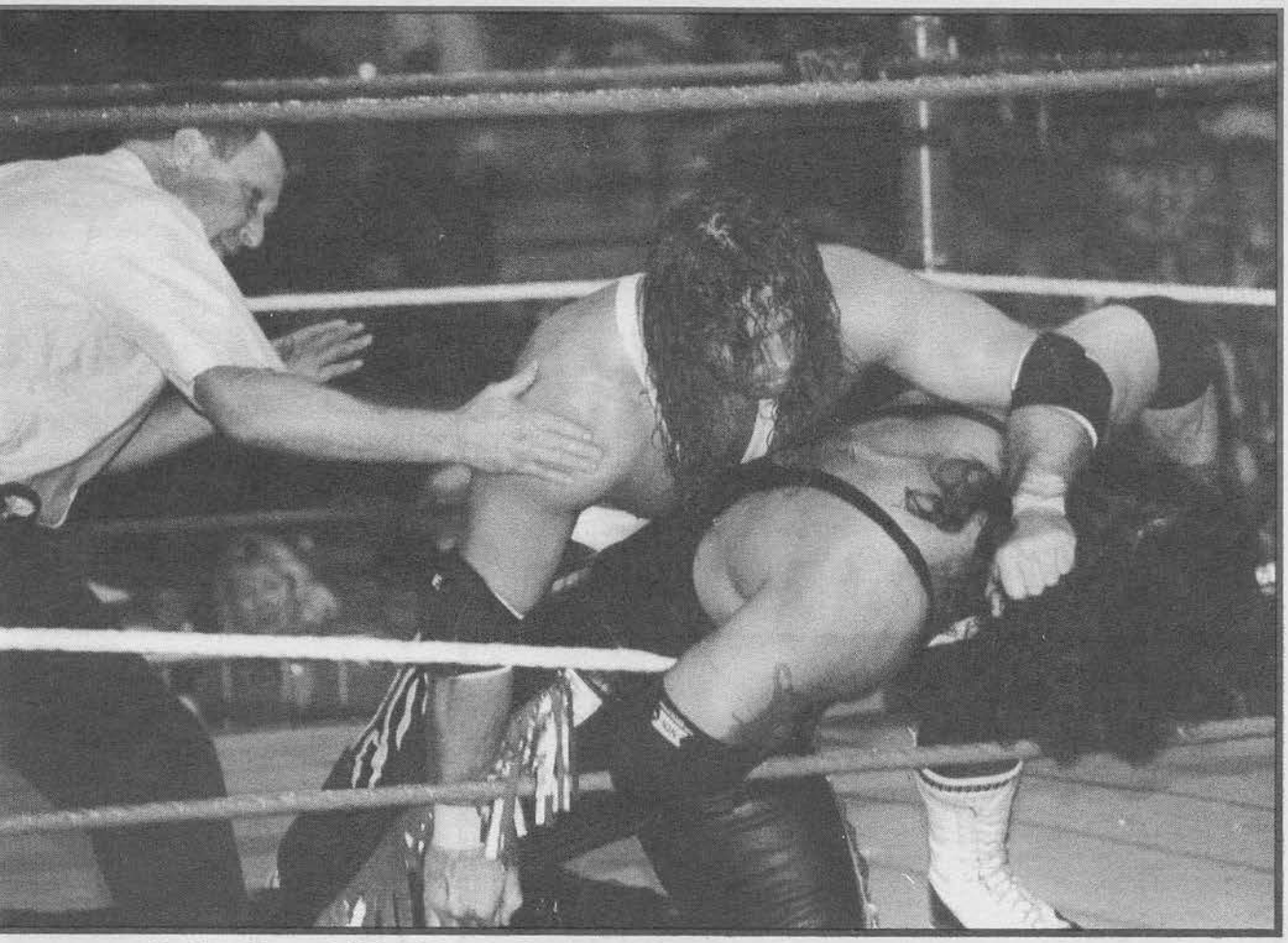


A familiar sight: Bret Hart finishing off Owen Hart with a "sharpshooter." Bret knows some fans have tired of seeing him wrestle his brother, but says he felt he had to renew the feud after Owen cost him the World title.

But the Calgary-born superstar lost the World belt to Bob Backlund at the 1994 Survivor Series, and when Backlund dropped the title three nights later to Diesel, Hart was further away from the championship than he had been in years. Since then, he has fought Diesel only once for the World title; that match, at the 1995 Royal Rumble, ended in a no-contest when Shawn Michaels, The Roadie, and Jeff Jarrett attacked Diesel, and Owen Hart and Backlund attacked Bret.

*As a result, Bret Hart dropped to fourth in the 1995 "**PWI** 500," behind Diesel, Michaels, and popular WCW U.S. heavyweight champion Sting.*

Perhaps most disturbing to "The Hitman" is that he's gaining a reputation as a grudge wrestler—a man who is more concerned with settling differences with his enemies than going after titles. Hart's supporters point out that he is a two-time former WWF World champion who has already accomplished great things and can afford to get sidetracked occasionally. His detractors argue that



Bret hasn't wrestled Diesel since an interference-marred match at the Royal Rumble. He predicts he and "Big Daddy Cool" will wrestle again soon ... and hopes it's just a one-on-one bout this time.

Hart is wasting his talent and his time.

Whatever side you're on, there's no disputing that over the past year, Hart has wrestled Backlund, Owen, Jerry Lawler, Japanese star Hakushi, and Dr. Isaac Yankem in matches that have had little impact on the WWF World title race. He beat Backlund in an "I Quit" match at WrestleMania XI, the WWF's showcase event. He beat Owen in a no-holds-barred match on ***WWF Monday Night Raw****, and Lawler in a ridiculous "kiss-my-foot" match at the King of the Ring.*

The common theme in all of these matches, however, is that Hart keeps on winning. And that's been Hart's trademark for more than a decade, since he and Jim Neidhart formed The Hart Foundation. Hart is one of only three men in wrestling history to have won the WWF World, Intercontinental, and tag team titles.

Senior Editor Bill Apter spoke with "The Hitman" after a recent WWF card. Hart, gracious as ever, displayed his typical intensity and promised that all is not said and done with his career.

***

WRESTLING SUPERSTARS: Let's start off with the bad news ...

BRET HART: Tough questions first, right, Bill?

WS: That's right, Bret, let's get them right out of the way. As you know by now, after two consecutive years at number one in the "*PWI* 500," you dropped to fourth this year. How do you feel about that?

BH: Well, moving down is never better than moving up, so I can't say I'm happy about it, but I'm not all that mad, either. It's just an indication that the past year for me wasn't all it could have been. Sure, I held the belt for a long time, but then I lost it to Backlund, and I haven't gotten it back, so it wouldn't exactly be fair for me to say that you guys weren't justified

in dropping me. That's just the way things are. Last year, I was WWF World champion, and I deserved to be number one in the "500." This year I'm not champion, and some people would say I don't deserve it. But, you know, there's nothing shabby about being fourth, and I agree wholeheartedly that Diesel is a deserving number one. So three of the first four in the "500" are WWF wrestlers, and two of them have titles. Then there's me. That's pretty good.

WS: Do you think you'll ever again be number one?

BH: Well, a lot of that is up to you guys, but I can make your decision a lot easier by regaining the WWF World title, and I'll make you a promise that I will. You know, this is a "what-have-you-done-for-me-lately" sport, and past accomplishments don't always mean that much. I was champion, and now I'm working hard on once again becoming champion, but it means nothing until I get there.

WS: And when you get there, you expect to be number one again?

BH: Yeah, I'd better be! *(Laughing)* This is now four of the five times that the WWF World champion has been in the top spot, so I think we've set the standard. There's no doubt in my mind that the best competition in the world is right here in the WWF, and anybody who doesn't believe it should look down the roster. Diesel, Shawn Michaels, Razor Ramon, The Undertaker, Sid Vicious, Bam Bam Bigelow, myself.

WS: Does that make it something you shoot for even more?

BH: I don't know how it's possible to give more than your best. It's my main goal, my only goal. Nothing else really matters.

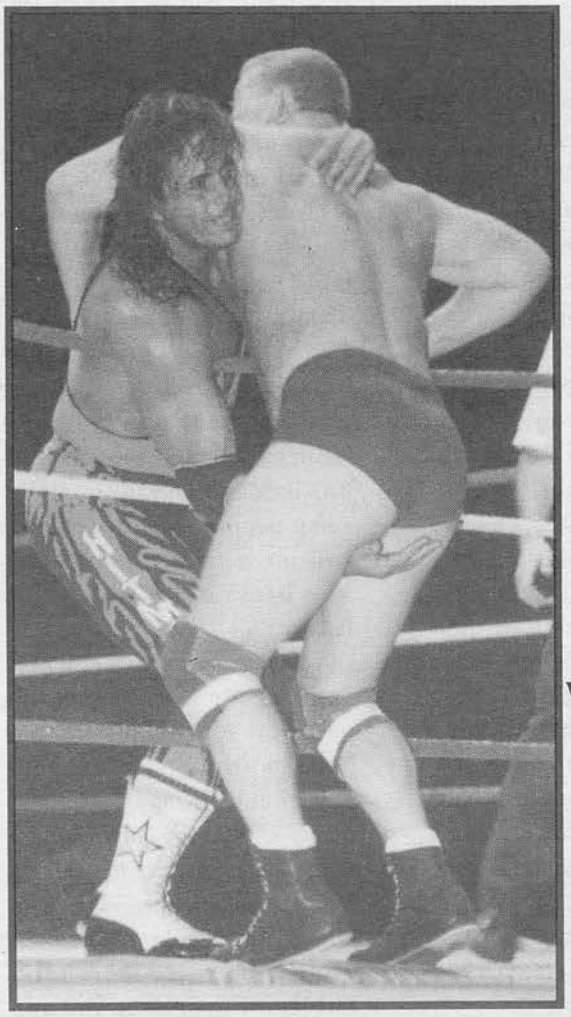
WS: I hear what you're saying, Bret, but, well ... your actions don't exactly speak louder than your words. In fact, a lot of people are calling you a grudge wrestler. You know, a wrestler who's more interested in settling personal differences than winning championships. How do you respond to that?

BH: You know, that's a tough one to respond to. First of all, let me clear up any misconception right now: There's nothing more important to me in this sport than winning the WWF World heavyweight championship. It is my be all and end all. That said, I think it's fair for us to examine the circumstances of the past year, okay?

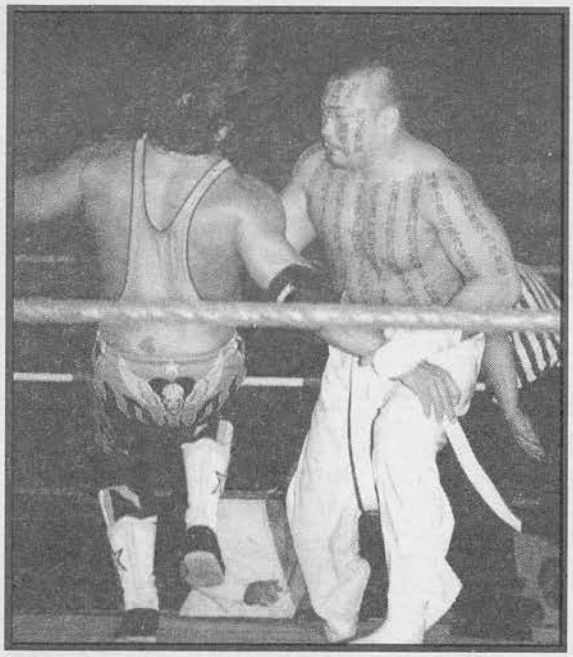
WS: Hey, this is your time. Go right ahead.

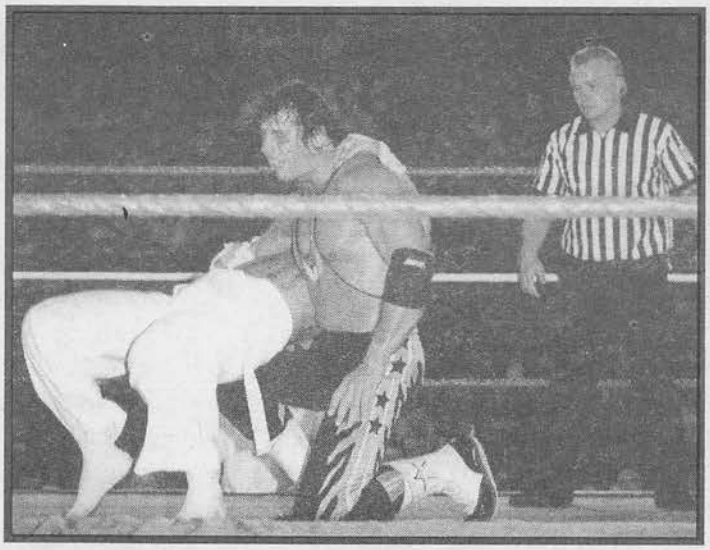
BH: I lost the belt to Backlund at the 1994 Survivor Series. Everybody who saw that match knows that my brother Owen tricked my mother into throwing in the towel for me, something I never would have done on my own. I'm not blaming Mom for anything—she was just looking out for me, as always—but that's just the truth of the matter. I was all signed for a rematch with Backlund. You can check with any WWF official, and they'll tell you it's true, but then two days later, Backlund loses the belt to Diesel. Diesel got the title shot because my arm was still hurting from Backlund's chicken wing. He took advantage of an opportunity. I was thrilled for him. I was thrilled to see Backlund go down in flames in eight seconds.

WS: Tough timing for you, though.



With Diesel occupied for months with a feud with Shawn Michaels earlier this year, Hart felt he had little other choice but to get revenge on Bob Backlund at WrestleMania XI and other cards. He accomplished his goal.





Hart has high praise for the skills of Hakushi, the Japanese warrior who gave him many tough matches, but never beat him. As for Hakushi and Jerry Lawler's charges that he's a racist, Hart says it's sad that they had to stoop so low.

BH: Terrible timing for me, great timing for Diesel. A couple of things had to be settled after that. I was still mad at Backlund and the WWF didn't know whether they wanted me to wrestle Diesel. You know, the fan favorite vs. fan favorite argument. The thing is, at that point, how could I not wrestle Owen after what he and Backlund had done? If I don't beat Owen again, people are talking behind my back, and my reputation's ruined. That means something to me. But then, right after I beat Owen in that no-holds-barred match at *Raw*, me and Diesel have that great match at the Royal Rumble. It's too bad those idiots didn't let us finish what we started. They ruined a classic match, and now we'll never know who would have won the match. We coulda gone at it for an hour or more that night.

WS: When you say idiots, you're talking about Michaels, Backlund, and Owen, right?

BH: That's right. It was a joke. By this time, Shawn earned the title match at WrestleMania XI, so there was nothing left for me to do but go after Backlund, which is exactly what I did. It's not like I had a choice. I wanted Backlund, and Backlund wanted me, and Diesel wasn't available. That's all there is to it. You know, people can say I'm only interested in settling grudges right now, but if I ignored the Backlunds and Lawlers and Hakushis, those same people would probably call me a coward, someone who backs down from challenges.

WS: But then you wrestled Hakushi in the first In Your House pay-per-view and then had that "kiss-my-foot" match with Lawler at the King of the Ring, then you didn't even wrestle on the televised part of the July In Your House pay-per-view. You know, Bret, people are talking.

BH: That's okay, let them talk, but let me guarantee you and everybody reading this that I will fight for the World title several times over the coming months, and if I don't win it, it won't be for lack of effort. I have not lost my focus. I have not lost sight of my goal in life. I am not ready to compromise in any way.

WS: I have to ask you about all the allegations that Lawler and Hakushi and Shinja made about you being a man who hates the people of Japan.

BH: Yeah, unfortunately, it's something I have to respond to. Lawler is just such a coward that he has to come up with these wild, ridiculous stories to try to throw me off my game. And to be honest, he got to me at In Your House. He found a way to beat me, even though it took a three-on-one assault while the referee was tied up in the ropes. But I got my revenge at King of the Ring. It's really too bad that he got to Hakushi. He poisoned the man's mind.

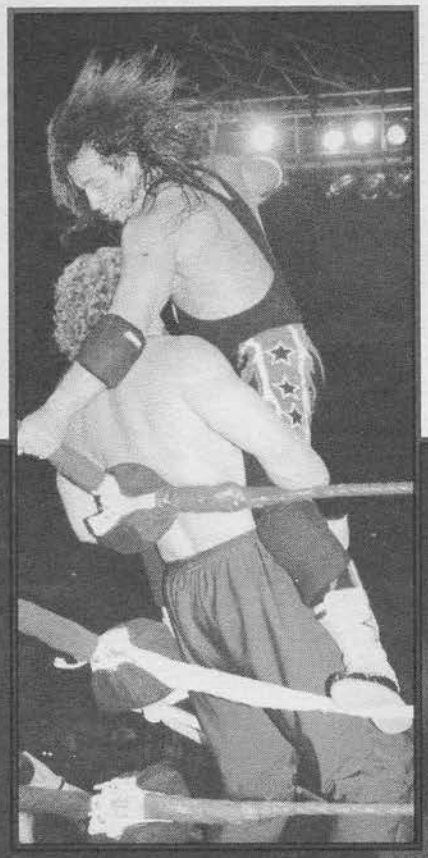
Hakushi would be such a great wrestler if he'd stop listening to that moron. He already is a great athlete, but he could be better.

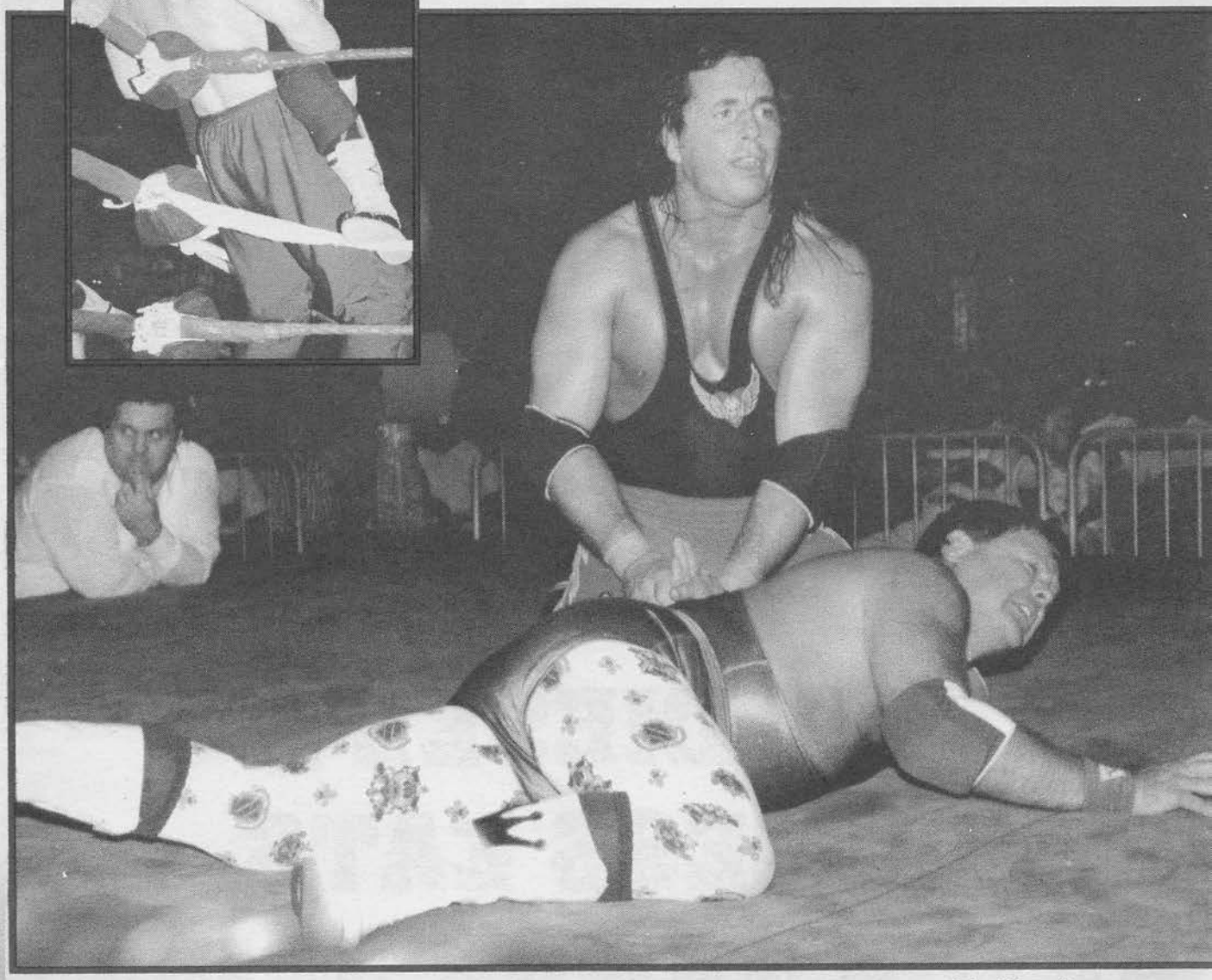
WS: Should Diesel be worried about you?

BH: Diesel should be prepared and proud. He doesn't have to worry about me, and I don't have to worry about him. I'm never going to jump him from behind or anything like that. I want to wrestle him again, but it's gotta be in a fair match. If we both wrestle our best, it will be a great match, and may the best man win.

WS: How about "Psycho" Sid? What's your opinion about him?

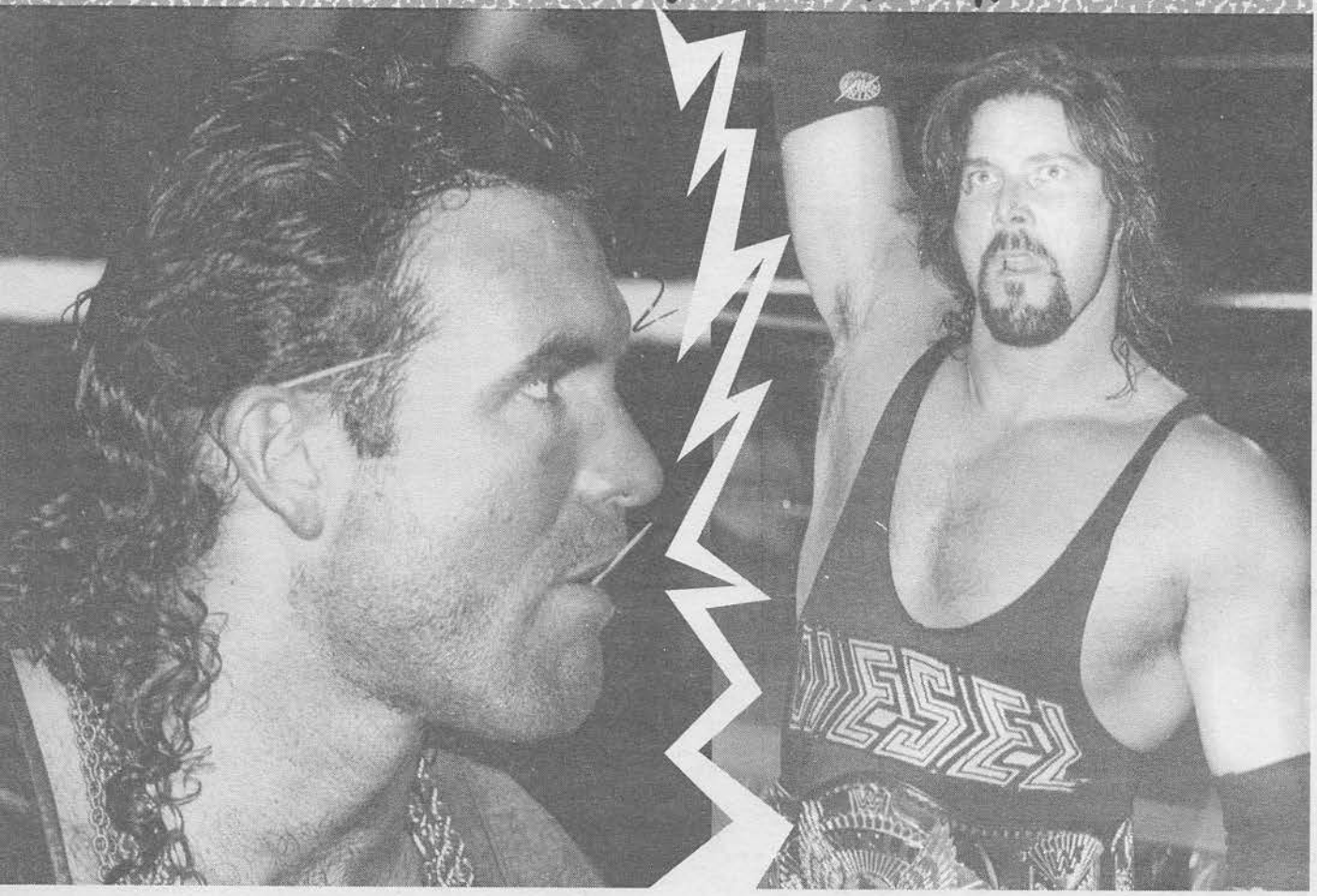
BH: If he's the champion—and I doubt that'll ever happen—then that's the way things are, and I'll have to deal with him instead of Diesel. Same thing with Mabel. But that's something I have no control over. The WWF World title isn't mine, it's Diesel's, and worrying about who's champion is something I just don't have time for. □



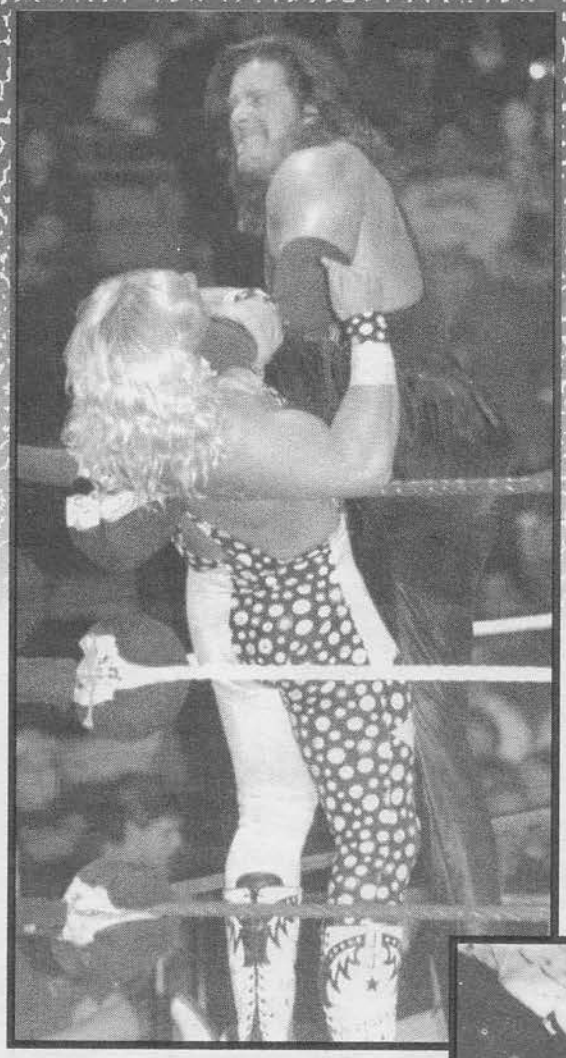


Hart's battles with Jerry Lawler (above) have gone on for more than two years now. "The Hitman" pointed out that the only time Lawler beat him this year was when he got a ton of help from Hakushi and Shinja. Hart shows how to minimize Dr. Isaac Yankem's eight-inch height advantage (top left).

JEALOUSY CUTS DEEP



WHY DIESEL'S SUCCESS EATS RAZOR RAMON ALIVE

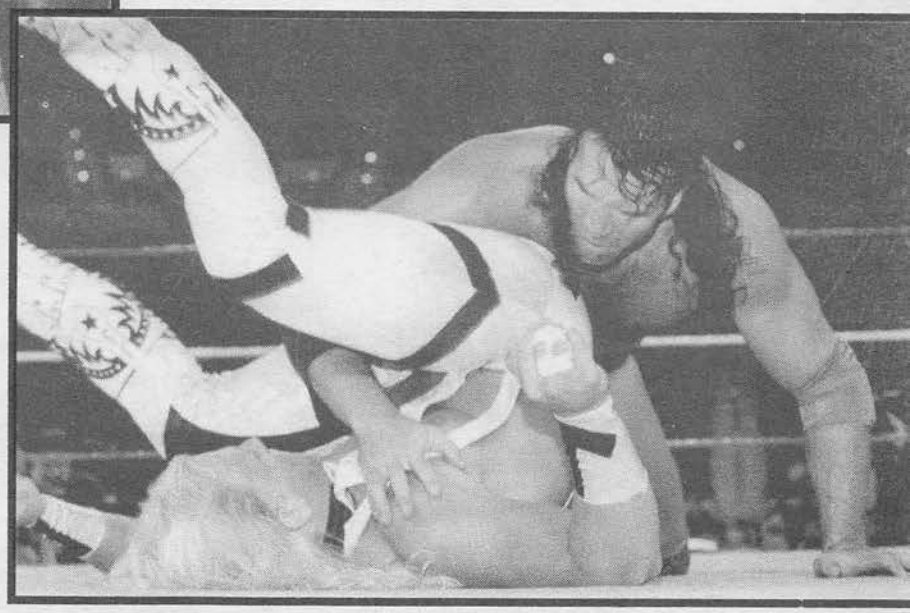


By Bryan Ethier

THERE ARE NIGHTS when he can't bear to hear the deafening blare of the diesel truck's horn. There are nights when the ring announcer's echoing introduction of "Big Daddy Cool" nearly sends him running from the wrestling arena, and away from the sport that once made him an icon.

Today, he is a man on the razor's edge.

A year ago, Razor Ramon was Intercontinental champ and the most popular man in the WWF. Now the "Bad Guy" isn't such a hot commodity. And it burns him to see that Diesel is



One reason Ramon seethes as soon as he sees Diesel is Jeff Jarrett. Diesel manhandled "Double-J" in a series of bouts (top left), while Razor, although he pinned Jarrett several times (above), ultimately came up short in their feud.

A year ago, Razor Ramon towered over the rest of the WWF community. He was the street-smart, 6'8" Intercontinental champ, the "Bad Guy" with the devilish, crooked grin. He walked around with a toothpick jutting

out of the corner of his mouth, the slick hair, and the 48-hour beard. He looked every bit the cool, entertaining Miami socialite.

Then a funny thing happened, only Ramon found nothing humorous in it. On his way to taking over as the best wrestler in the WWF, an ostentatious bleached-blond with dreams of ruling the *Billboard* country singles chart beat him and took away his Intercontinental title. And when Jeff Jarrett beat Razor Ramon for the I-C crown, he stripped the "Bad Guy" of his gold, and in the process, much of his heart, his drive, ... and his power over the souls of his fans.

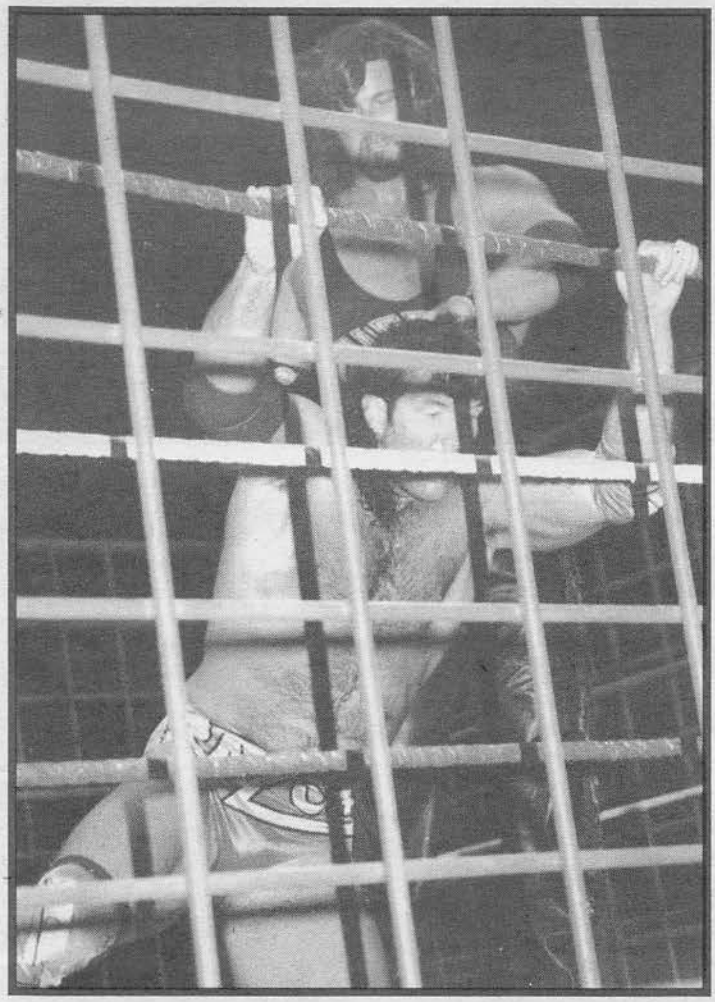
Although tall enough to post up Michael Jordan, Razor Ramon today *looks* small. Perhaps that's because every time he sees Diesel wearing the WWF World belt, he feels like he stands about 4'10". These days, the "Bad Guy" is the "Jealous Guy." He knows that *he* should be the one serenading fair maidens, as Diesel has done. He recognizes that he is as talented as Diesel, as powerful as Diesel, as intimidating as Diesel, and almost as big as Diesel.

But why can't Ramon come to grips with the fact that Diesel today is the WWF personified?

"It's more than jealousy," confided one WWF fan favorite. "Razor once beat Diesel for the I-C title. He is as physically dominating a wrestler as is Diesel. But he lacks three things: He lacks the friends, he lacks Diesel's confidence and steely glare, and he lacks the mettle to consistently win big matches. It's killing him, and his wrestling has suffered for it."

The demographics prove Diesel is today's true superstar. He is popular with fans of all ages. Ramon's popularity is somewhat limited to women who love a man

Tatanka is just one of many, many men Diesel has pinned this year. On the other hand, Razor has had trouble putting together even modest winning streaks after fully expected 1995 to be *his* year.



You can only expect Ramon to let this jealousy eat at him for a little while longer. He'll have to act on his feelings sooner or later. When he does, expect more Diesel-Ramon wars.

who oozes machismo. More important, no wrestler today has an entourage as charismatic and influential as Diesel. Consider that his unofficial list of cornermen includes new I-C champ Shawn Michaels and Bam Bam Bigelow, two of wrestling's most popular wrestlers. These three effuse so much energy that it's impossible to dislike them.

Conversely, Razor's closest ally is Savio Vega, a friend and capable wrestler. But this duo has yet to distinguish itself in the tag team division. And Vega, unlike Michaels, doesn't have movie-star looks and attitude.

Then there is the Diesel stare, which is as formidable as Waylon Mercy's sleeperhold. Ramon's puckish grin works well ... if he has a belt around his waist. Therein lies Ramon's problem. He is a champion stripped of his badge of greatness. And Diesel seems reluctant to offer his nemesis a shot at the World belt.

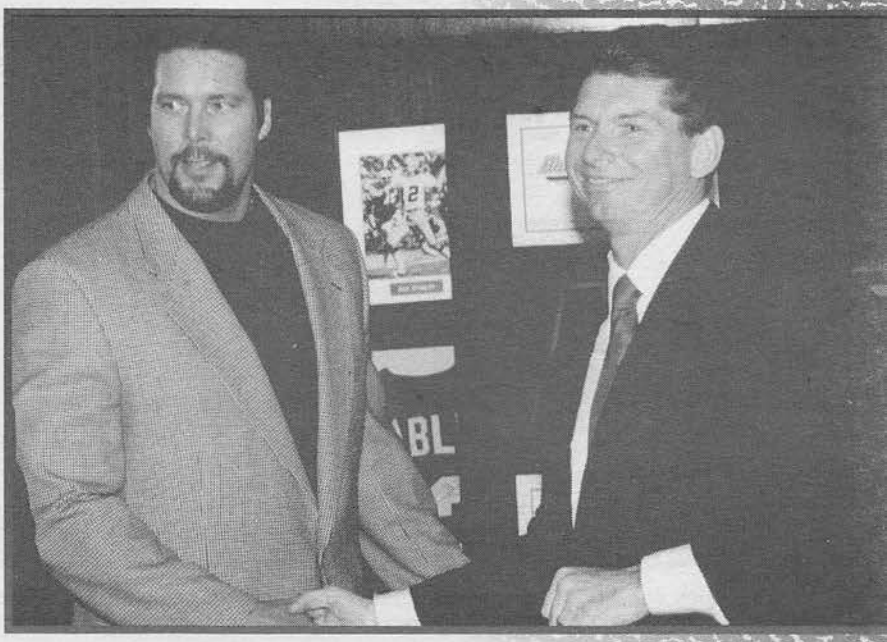
So just how jealous is Ramon, and will it affect his future in the WWF? People are already beginning to talk about the possibility of him turning rulebreaker.

It seems hard to believe that a man as upbeat as the "Bad Guy" could turn had just because he is jealous. Furthermore, Ramon has yet to publicly denounce "Big Daddy Cool."

Maybe he should. Perhaps he should just have a man-to-man chat with Diesel and open up to him. Be sensitive, vulnerable. Cry a bit. Talk about his insecurities. Who are we kidding? That will never happen. What could occur is this: Razor Ramon will continue to struggle in the ring, continue to lose tag team matches with Savio Vega, and his popularity will continue to wane. Depression will set in, but just briefly.

Then the true "Bad Guy" part of him will emerge, awaken with a scream like a three-month-old with gas. Then Ramon will be back and making some noise. He will do something about his jealousy and forget about all the friendships he made with the WWF's fan favorites. Remember, he did have a brief stint as a rulebreaker in the USWA this spring, and he won the heavyweight title in his first match there. Soon he will be ready to face Diesel in the squared circle. By that time, Razor Ramon the rulebreaker might be back for the long haul.

Until it happens, however, Razor Ramon's jealousy will continue to consume his gut like a spreading cancer. □

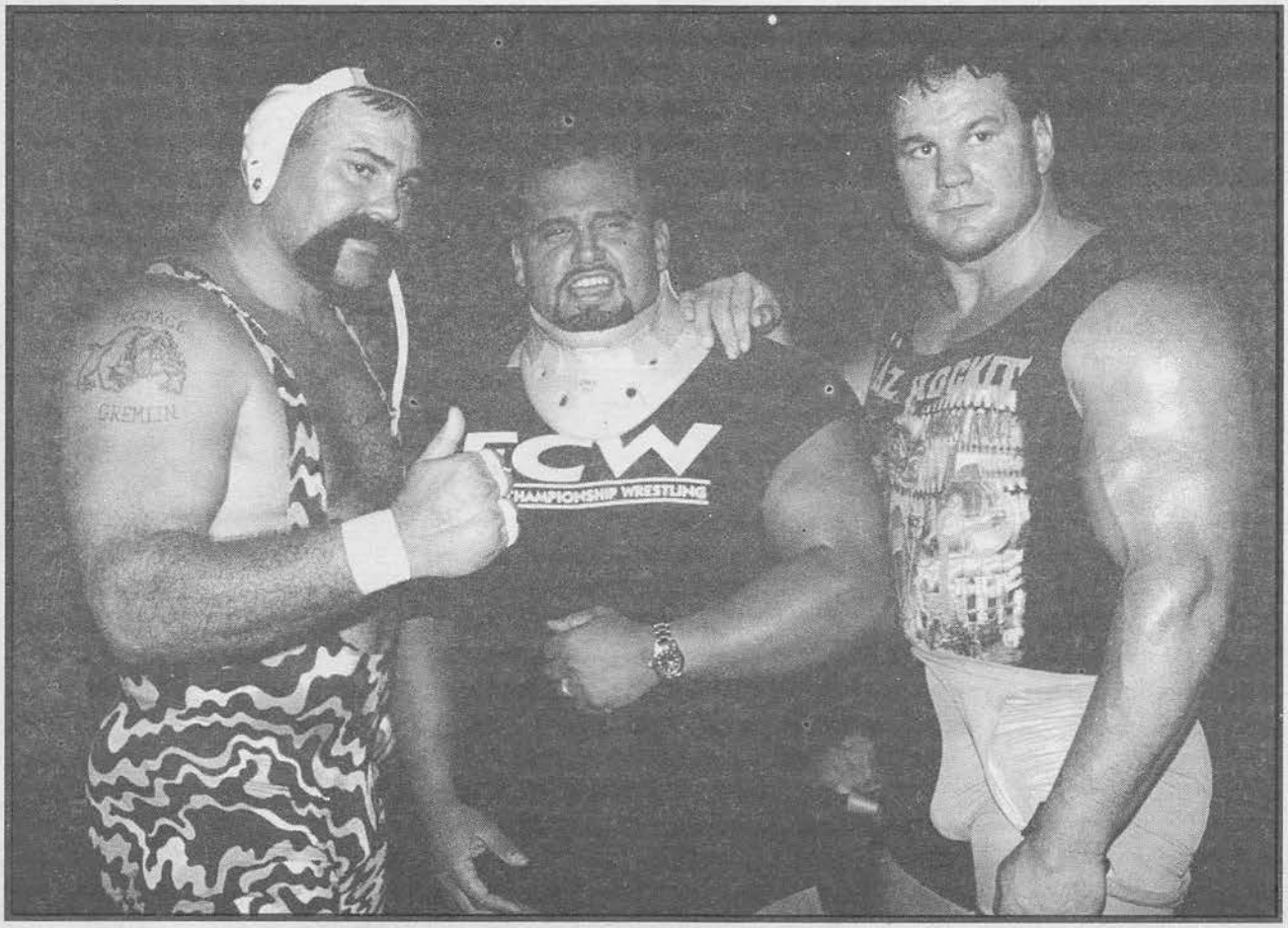


Ramon probably feels like exploding when he sees pictures like this. We're not saying WWF head Vince McMahon shows favoritism toward "Big Daddy Cool," but it's no secret he thinks he makes a terrific champion.

PAUL E.'S SECRET FORCE THE STEINERS TO

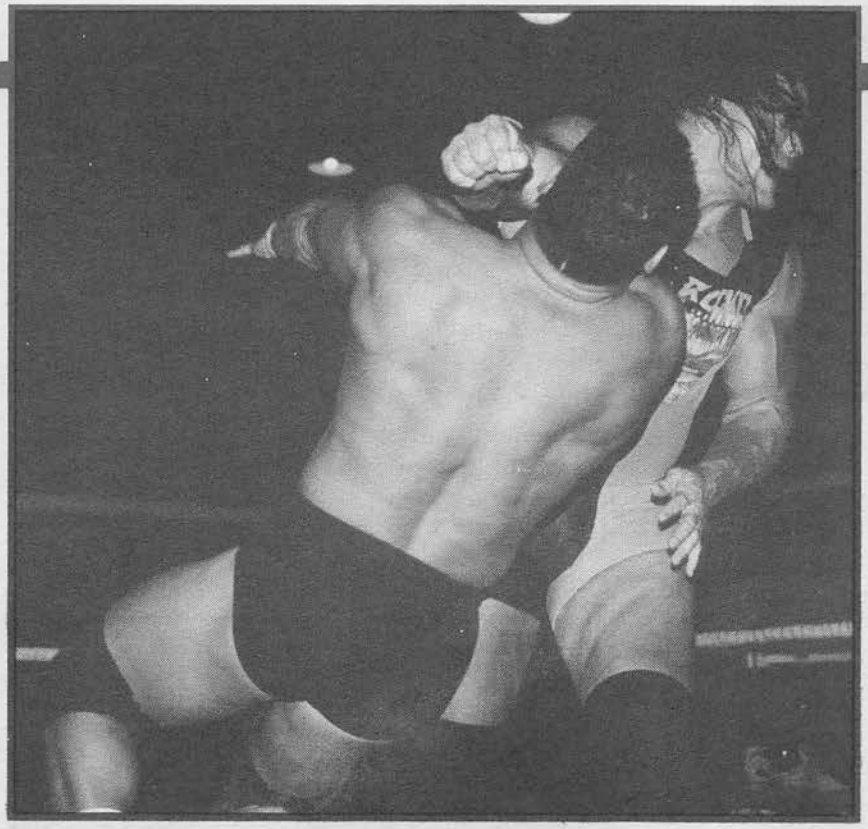
Rick and Scott Steiner, forever brothers and teammates, are now wrestling in ECW. But with Paul E. Dangerously at the controls, is their lifelong partnership about to become a dangerous liaison?

Photos by Jason Ross Lavin



Rick and Scott Steiner have joined ECW to help out their old friend Taz, who is injured. Paul E. Dangerously, however, could have other ideas for the brothers Steiner.

PLOT: WRESTLE–EACH OTHER!



Scott's clothesline is definitely as strong as it was before he and Rick took off for Japan several years ago. Now we have to wonder if he'll ever use it on Rick.

By Chris Bernucca

WHILE ALL OF Philadelphia was buzzing with the arrival of Rick and Scott Steiner in America's most dangerous federation, Paul E. Dangerously was planning to turn the town into "The City Of Brotherly Hate."

Although the megalomaniacal manager has acquired the dynamic duo, he might not intend to keep them together long. Rumors persist that Dangerously is again dealing in devious doings. Remember, this is Extreme Championship Wrestling, where the only thing that can be expected is the unexpected.

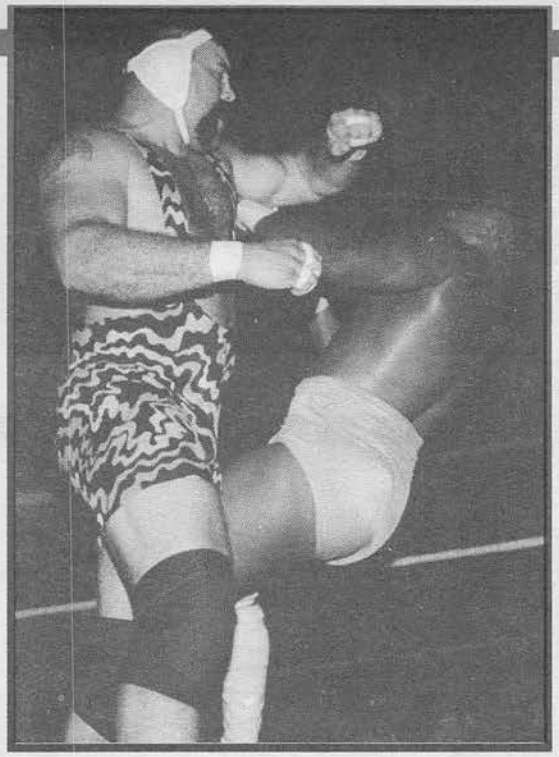
"It wouldn't surprise me one bit," said Woman, who had her own failed experiment at managing the brothers in 1989. "The man will stop at nothing. He doesn't treat wrestlers like people. He treats them like commodities to be bought and sold and manipulated, all for his own personal gain."

Woman admitted she had heard nothing of Dangerously's plans with the brother tandem, but others in ECW have. There are strong rumors that Dangerously has acquired Rick and Scott Steiner, two men he hated when all were in WCW together, for the express purpose of turning them against each other and keeping them at each other's throats for the rest of their lives.

"That's preposterous," Dangerously said when confronted with the scheme. "Why would I do that? I just signed one of the greatest tag teams in the history of the sport. What would I have to gain by breaking them up?"

Well, we can start with notoriety before moving on to finance. By breaking up the Steiners—who have been both inseparable and unstoppable since 1990—Dangerously would secure a place in the sport's history as the man who came between the greatest brother duo in the sport. You might not know it, but dozens of promoters over the years have offered the Steiners big bucks to wrestle each other. Each and every one has been turned down.

But why stop there? After splitting them up, Paul E. could bring them back in the ring



Rick means it when he says he is wrestling in ECW to beat up on 2 Cold Scorpio and get revenge for Taz. It is clear, though, that some of his brother's comments are getting to him.

together—as mortal enemies. Imagine the interest and intrigue, the hype and hysteria, in the days leading up to the showdown. It is a match that could easily headline a pay-per-view, a venue previously unchartered by ECW. As manager of one of the brothers and de facto promoter of the bout, Dangerously stands to make hundreds of thousands of dollars!

When presented with this option, you could almost see the visions of dollar signs dancing in Dangerously's head. But he quickly dismissed the idea.

"You guys [reporters] have very active imaginations," he said. "But Rick and Scott are here to wrestle for me. Together. Understood?!"

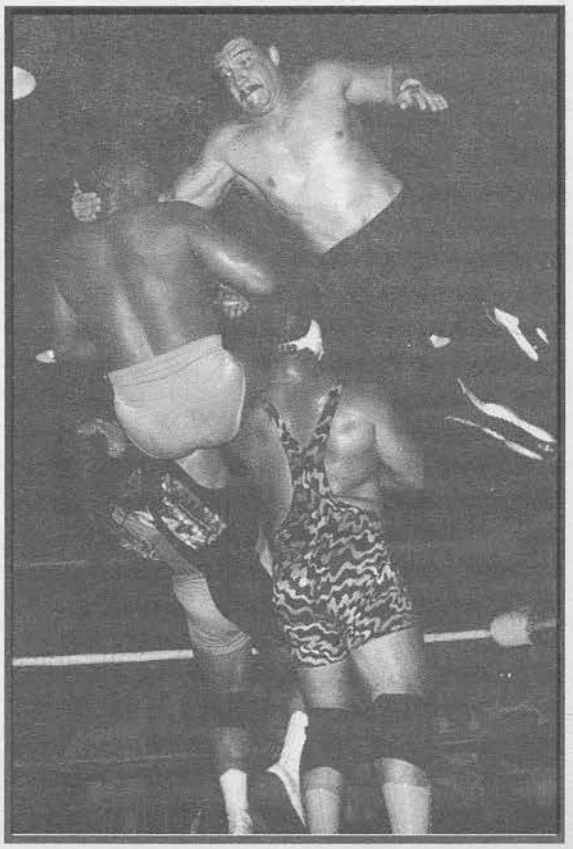
Not entirely. Rick had already made a solo venture into ECW early in 1995, pairing with Taz. Dangerously's plan—at least on the surface—is to put Rick, Scott, and others, including Eddy Guerrero (Taz is out with a neck injury), together in six-man bouts against Chris Benoit, Dean Malenko, and 2 Cold Scorpio. The move is in retaliation for an attack on Taz by Malenko and Scorpio.

"Taz is a friend, and we're here to help him," Scott Steiner said. "We don't like that kind of crap. Rick's wrestled with him before and says he's on the up-and-up. Dangerously? Hey, as long as we get paid and get the matches we want, I'll work for him. But he better not cross me or my brother!"

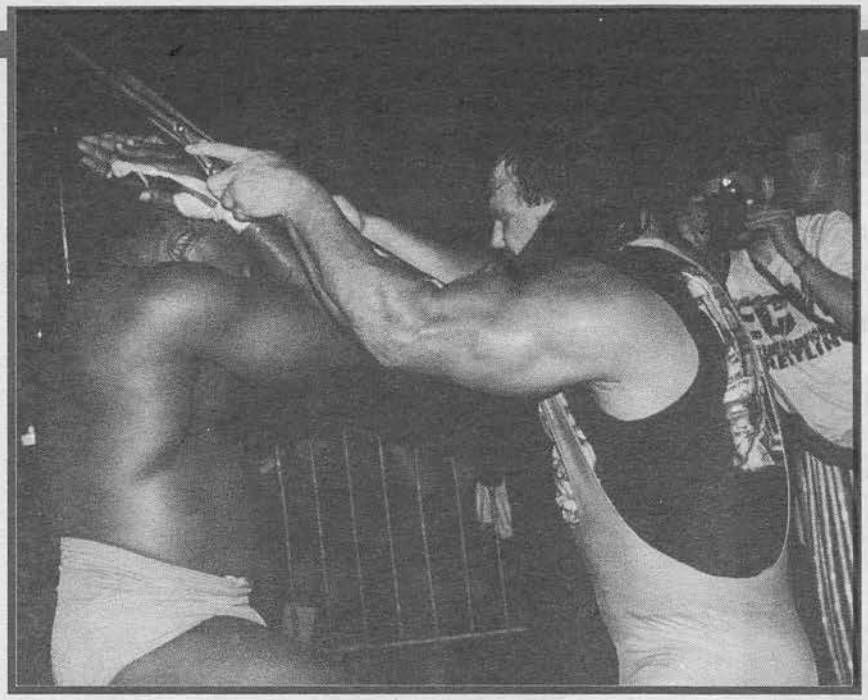
Apparently, Dangerously has already begun that process. He has told a few wrestlers that he doubts Scott Steiner's toughness and wondered out loud if he had what it took to compete in ECW. He has even hinted that he has heard that Rick feels the same way.

"I've seen Rick in action, and he makes a great team with Taz," Dangerously said. "But in my book, the jury's still out on Scott. He has to show me has what Taz has, what his brother has. This is ECW, not WCW. That technical stuff doesn't always get you very far here. You have to be able to brawl your way out of trouble and shed a little blood."

Dangerously has been dropping similar statements around ECW locker rooms and, through other wrestlers, the words have made their way back to Scott Steiner. The originator of the "Frankensteiner" has always been a very proud competitor who rises to every challenge of his abilities and manhood. But throughout his career, he has consistently avoided any comparisons to his brother—until now. Following a recent card, he addressed the issue. Before the dust had cleared, he had shown that the rumors were at least partially true.



This is vintage Steiners ... with a little help (in the form of a clothesline) from Eddy Guerrero. It would be a shame if anyone—Mr. Dangerously included—intentionally and maliciously split them up.



Perhaps Scott heard the rumors Dangerously has been spreading and took them to heart. He knows he's tough enough to cut it in ECW and proved it when he waged chair warfare against Scorpio.

"Rick's a great brawler, but he'd be the first to tell you that I'm the better scientific wrestler," Scott said. "And I can handle myself in a brawl, too. I've been hit with plenty of chairs in my day, and I'm still coming at you. Just let me in the ring and I'll show Dangerously what tough is. The first thing he'll have to do is figure out who's the odd man out."

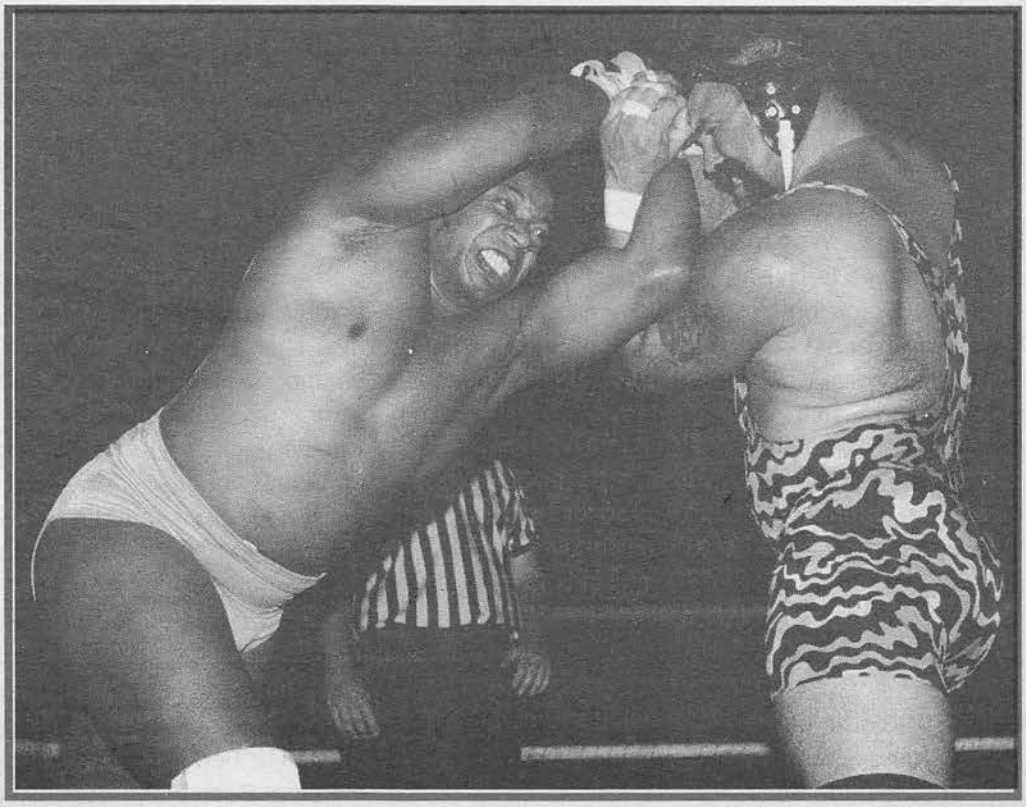
Standing nearby, Rick Steiner couldn't believe what he had just heard his brother say.

"Now why would you want to say something like that?" he asked Scott. "We got a pretty good thing going here. We're supposed to be a team. You start talking like that, how do you think Guerrero is gonna feel? He wants to be part of a united team."

"I wasn't talking about Guerrero, tough guy," Scott Steiner said with a grin. The brothers quickly became engaged in an impromptu match, something they have done hundreds of times as teammates. But this one appeared a bit more serious than the others. Guerrero ran over and was finally able to separate Rick and Scott. Nobody was sure if the play-fighting would go further.

"What are you doing?" he asked Scott. No one was smiling, until Dangerously arrived with a grin plastered across his face.

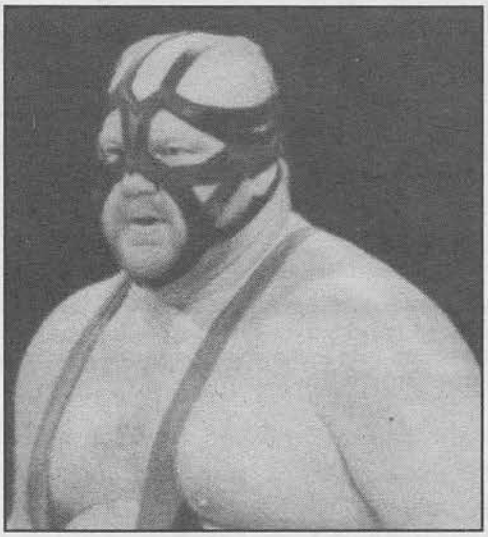
"Nothing to worry about, Eddy," he said, the grin widening. "It's just a little roughhousing. I've known these guys for a while, and nothing can really come between them. Right, guys?" □



We found it hard to believe that Scott criticized his brother's technical skills. Scorpio would probably tell you his armlock is pretty effective.

SUPERSTAR

DREAM MATCH



THE UNDERTAKER VS. BIG VAN VADER

COMPARING THE COMBATANTS

THE UNDERTAKER

Stands 6'8" and weighs 328 pounds ... Managed by Paul Bearer ... Was a rulebreaker early in his WWF career, but has been one of the most popular athletes in the WWF for the last four-plus years ... Defeated Hulk Hogan for the WWF World title at Survivor Series 1991, but the title was held up six days later ... Master of the casket match ... Possesses a great "tombstone" piledriver finisher ... Native of Dallas, Texas ... Began his career as The Punisher and competed in WCW as "Mean" Mark Callous ... Has feuded on and off with Yokozuna since 1993 ... Disappeared for several months after Yokozuna and a team of rulebreakers locked him in a casket at Royal Rumble '94 ... Returned at SummerSlam and beat Ted DiBiase's "Evil Undertaker" ... Still occasionally competes in the USWA, where he has renewed his feud with "Psycho" Sid Vicious ... Has the most chilling ring entrance of any wrestler in the world.

BIG VAN VADER

Stands 6'5" and weighs 450 pounds ... One of the most dangerous and sadistic wrestlers in the world, Vader recently stunned everyone by turning fan favorite and forming a tentative alliance with former rival Hulk Hogan ... Three-time former WCW World champ ... Has inflicted devastating injuries on Ron Simmons, Nikita Koloff, Joe Thurman, Sting, and Cactus Jack ... Has a devastating power bomb and incredible moonsault in his repertoire ... Once held the IWGP, CWA, and UWA titles at the same time ... Briefly held the IWGP tag title with Bam Bam Bigelow ... Formerly managed by Harley Race ... Former All-American offensive lineman at the University of Colorado ... Played briefly for the Los Angeles Rams ... Had a handful of bouts against Hogan in 1995, but could never beat him ... Started feuding with Ric Flair after Flair berated him for losing to Hogan in a cage match at Bash at the Beach in July.

Truth conspires against fantasy in our "Dream Match" this issue ... well, almost. First, the spate of Big Van Vader run-ins at recent USWA cards clashed with our publishing plans—for months, we had planned to pit the two of them against each other in a "Dream Match," and they came within an hour or so of going nose-to-nose inside a ring in Memphis in real life.

The date was June 26, 1995. Mr. World Class was wrestling T.D. Steele in a ho-hum encounter at the Mid-South Coliseum. Vader was in the middle of his "roadkill" tour, a tour in which he would just show up at various arenas—totally unannounced—and destroy any wrestlers he saw. That's what happened to Steele and Mr. World Class. Vader entered Mid-South Coliseum through a back door, charged the ring, and power-bombed both men several times. Had he shown up three matches later, he would have interfered in a tag team match involving The Undertaker. Major WWF star would have come face-to-face with major WCW star. We'll never know what would have happened. But we can speculate.

In each issue, WRESTLING SUPERSTARS will present a sensational Dream Match, a spectacular battle involving the sport's greatest athletes. It's unlikely this match will ever happen anywhere–except in the pages of this magazine and in the arena of your imagination!

THE STUDY

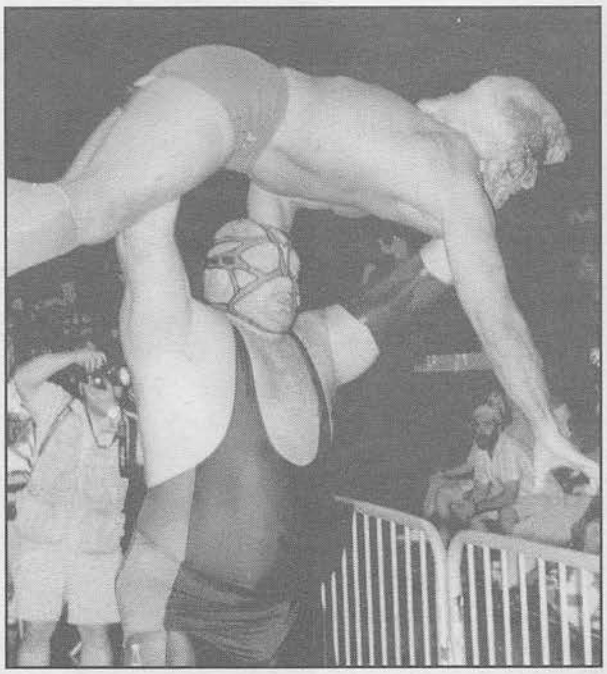
The term "superstar" has been stripped of meaning by a generation of fans and journalists unable to discriminate between what is truly great and what is merely good. "Superstar" labels are now affixed to wrestlers as soon as they do one great thing, as in "only a superstar could make a move like that," thus conferring upon the athlete a skill level he might well be able to reach but will never be unable to sustain.

That leads us to several questions: Does a singular act of superstardom make one a superstar? Is the journeyman point guard who for one season lights up his opponents for 34 points a game a superstar? Was Buster Douglas a superstar for knocking out Mike Tyson, or a stiff living under a lucky horoscope?

These questions would seem better suited to tavern discussions than to a university think tank, but they are precisely the questions being studied by seven research scientists from Harvard University, who were given $2-million grant to establish standard criteria for the word "superstar."

"It's fascinating work," said lead scientist Dr. Michelle Speigel. "We've graphed the performance of every professional athlete who ever played a sport. We studied their IQs, their psychological profiles, muscle-bone-fat ratios, their family lives—every quality of life—in hopes of finding why some athletes with major talent never utilize it, while others with no more physical talent than you or I become superstars.

"If we can discover a common denominator, it could be implemented as a training technique that would allow every athlete to ealize his complete potential."



Manhandling Ric Flair is something Big Van Vader has done a few times during the last two years. Nonetheless, since Vader's losses to Hulk Hogan, something hasn't been right with him. He has needed a spark.

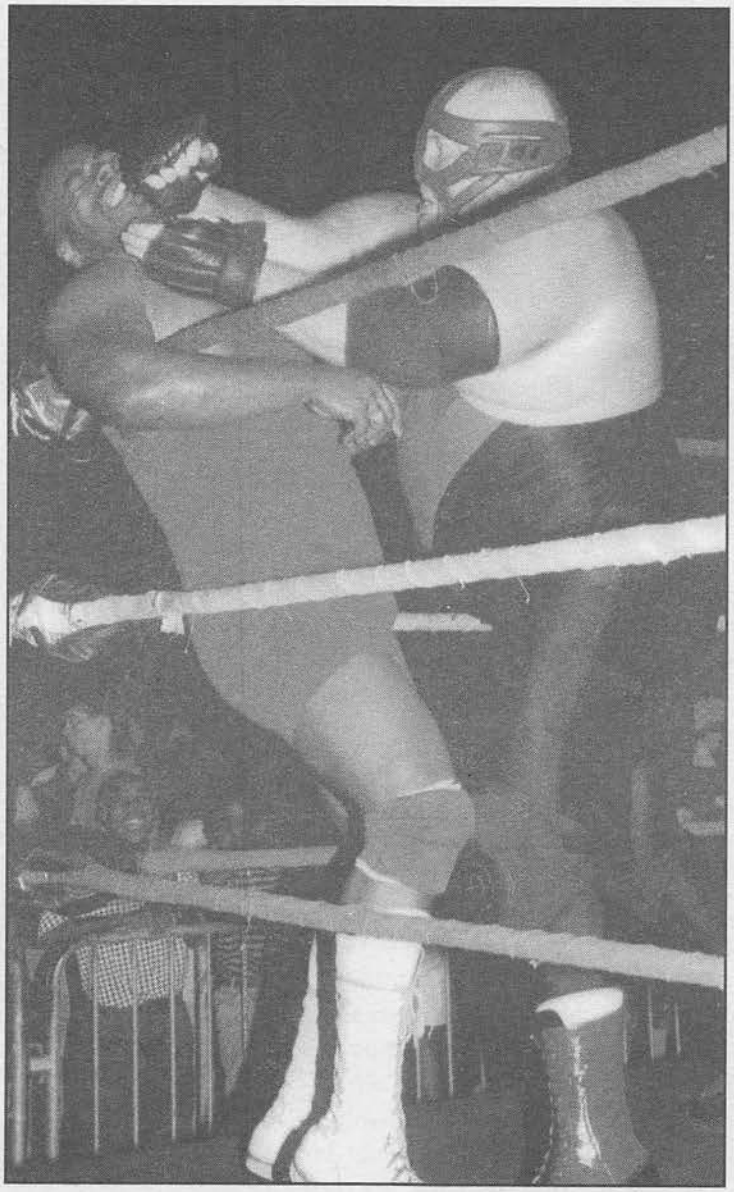
THE VADER

Big Van Vader didn't get where he is by reading about or participating in any studies. He couldn't care less about potential. But he did have an unquenchable urge to conquer—an instinct that over the past year

had been squashed, leaving him on a precarious ledge in his athletic life.

While his winning percentage remained among the highest in wrestling, Vader experienced trouble in big matches. He had lost his WCW World title in December of 1993 and was humiliated in a showdown against Hulk Hogan for which he was verbally undressed by Ric Flair. He took a measure of revenge by defeating Flair and Arn An-derson in a handicap match at Clash of the Champions XXXI and crushing Flair in a series of other matches, but the victories propelled him into an uneasy alliance with Hogan. "I feel like it's getting away from me," Vader said, referring to his career. "I don't know what it is, but I gotta do something."

The scientists at Harvard knew exactly what it was. "Vader is an athlete of instinct," Dr. Speigel explained. "He is an athlete of instinct the way Michael Jordan is an athlete of instinct. When Jordan started reflecting on his life, he knew had to get away from the game. Vader is experiencing a similar dilemma, but pride will not allow him to take the time off he requires. Instead, he'll flail away the only way he knows how."



USWA preliminary grappler T.D. Steele didn't know what hit him when Vader jumped him during his "roadkill" tour. He remembered that night, however. He remembered it and did something about it.

RUN-IN WITH THE DEVIL

And flail he did. "I don't know why I do it," Vader said about his "roadkill" tour. "It's just something I'm compelled to do. I don't even remember some of the attacks. I just know I feel better afterward."

The run-ins started again one evening at a Smoky Mountain Wrestling card in Erlanger, Kentucky. Brian Armstrong was wrestling Headbanger Mosh in an uneventful preliminary match when Vader suddenly broke down a door and stormed into the building.

"It was like he was in a trance," Mosh recalled. "His eyes were blank, like he didn't see us or nothing. I remember punching him square in the nose, and he didn't blink. Then I don't remember nothing."

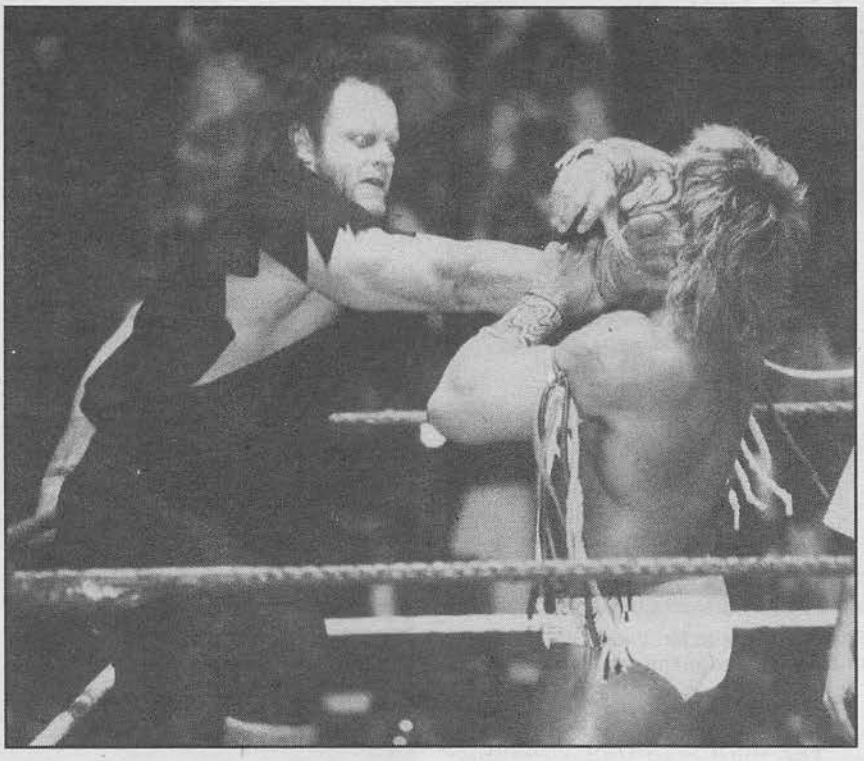
Vader flattened both wrestlers. Then, as quickly as he had appeared, he left. The pattern continued. Over the next several months, Vader's run-ins were hotly anticipated by wrestling fans—and dreaded by wrestlers. People tried to detect patterns and predict where he'd turn up next. Promoters who actually attempted to orchestrate the run-ins—and capitalize on them—were stonewalled.

"Vader will not discuss them," said one promoter. "He just hangs up or walks away."

Even Harley Race, Vader's ex-manager and close personal friend, remained mystified. "I know nothing about them and have nothing to do with them," he said. "Something inside him just snaps, and he finds a town that feels right. Then he does what he has to do. I'm just as surprised as the next guy when Vader runs in. I just hope it helps him get back on track."

UNDERTAKEN

According to the Harvard scientists, Mark Callous—more



It has been a few years since Undertaker last choke-slammed The Ultimate Warrior. He has been winning most of his matches lately, but hasn't been facing the WWF's best wrestlers.

popularly known as The Undertaker—was blessed with a reservoir of athletic ability as big as any man to ever step into the ring.

"We have tapes of this man's early matches that people would not believe," said Dr. Speigel. "He does things naturally, like he was born to them."

In one graph based solely on ability, Callous was projected as a superstar's superstar, a man capable of winning titles by the bushel. The Undertaker became a big star in the WWF, but fell short of expectations by a very wide margin. He has been unable to capture a title of any kind since he beat Hulk Hogan for the WWF World belt in 1991.

What happened?

"He became stuck as The Undertaker," Speigel explains. "The way Ickey Woods, (former star running back for the Cincinnati Bengals), William "Refrigerator" Perry, and Mark "The Bird" Fidrych became trapped in the personalities they invented. You lose touch with the essential you, which leads to lapses and, ultimately, injuries and slumps. You become a packaged commodity. Callous needed The Undertaker for life as a wrestler, but it was causing him tremendous damage. For a while he was trying too hard to cultivate a personality and not focusing on his wrestling."

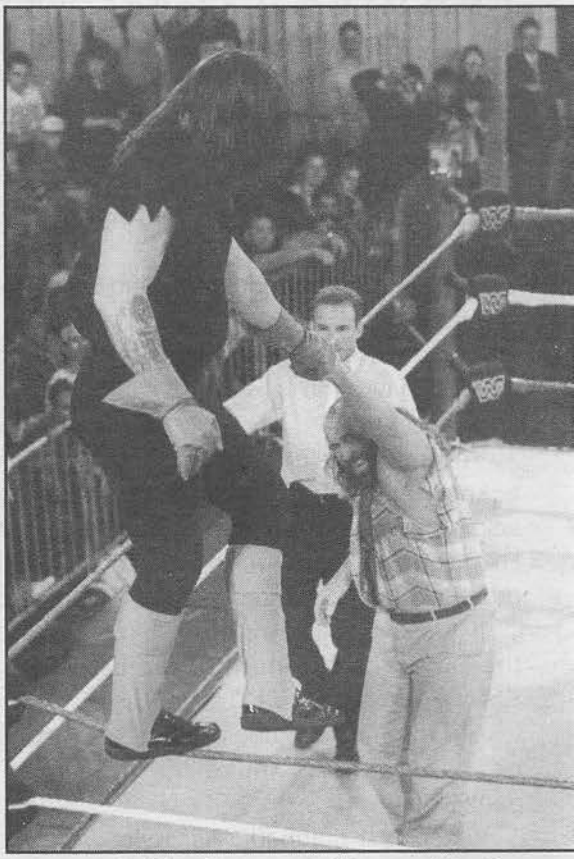
After bouncing around from feud to meaningless feud, Undertaker had emerged from a two-year slump by venturing into the independent circuit and wrestling in handicap matches.

"He didn't care who his opponents were," one promoter said. "He just wanted the action. And I tell you, the guy was wrestling better than ever. Undertaker, if you'll forgive the play on words, was no stiff. He was belting guys three at a pop. It was just a matter of time before he was a champion again."

The night of September 22 was insignificant to most fans piling into the Knox Central High School Auditorium in Barbourville, Kentucky. There were no title matches, no special events planned. It was just a card of good old-fashioned professional wrestling.

"Actually, it was the summer solstice," Dr. Speigel pointed out. "Astrologically speaking, it was a very big night for Vader and Undertaker."

Undertaker's match was hardly eventful. Three fresh bodies to beat, batter, and brutalize, all



Walking the ropes while wrenching the arm of an opponent is one of the most amazing things The Undertaker does. Maybe not as amazing as his ability to take punishment and recover quickly.

This is how Undertaker looked after his first encounter with Mr. Vader. Well, kind of. He also had a lot of blood streaming down his face and major problems with his nose and jaw.

things he was doing with extraordinary efficiency.

Then the fans rose to their feet, straining their necks to see if ... it ... was ... possible ... that ... yes! It was Big Van Vader walking slowly to the ring. Stunned witnesses corroborated previous stories of Vader run-ins.

"He seemed hypnotized," said one fan.

"It was the longest, scariest walk I'd ever seen in my life," said another.

Vader never paused, not to acknowledge the crowd, not to acknowledge the men in the ring. He stepped into the ring and grabbed the first person he saw.

"I never felt anything like the power in his hands," said SMW's Tommy Rich. "I'm glad he tossed me from the ring. I thought he was going to choke me to death."

Vader next grabbed Killer Kyle, who was spared a more serious injury than his broken cheekbone when Vader got tired of hitting him in the face.

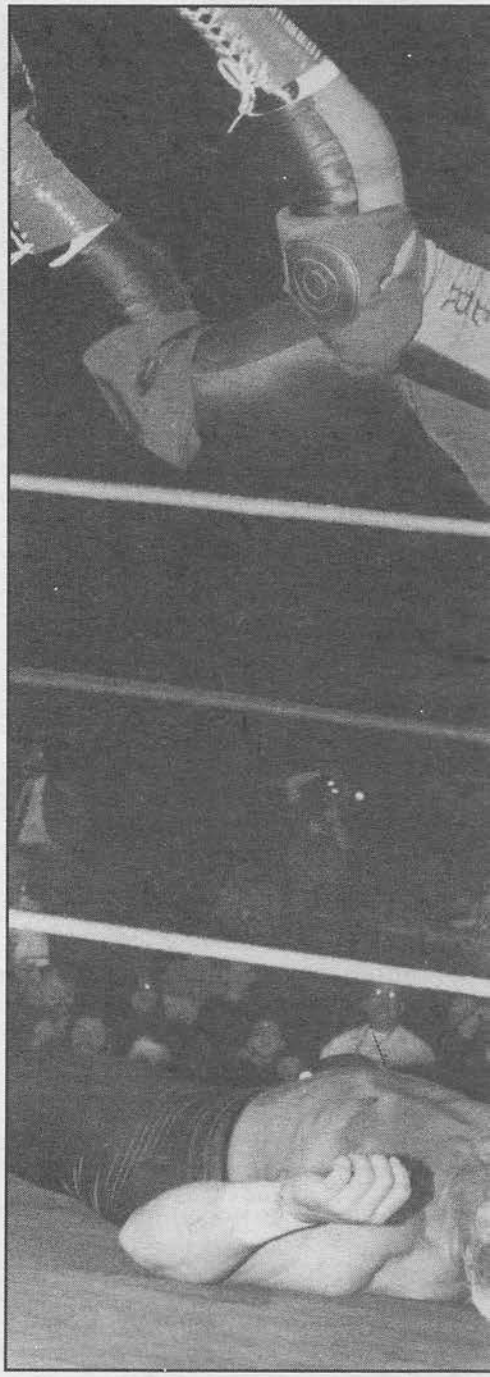
The third man Vader grabbed suffered the brunt of his assault. Vader's pummeling was relentless and ceaseless, like waves slamming down upon a beach. When the wrestler, who retired later that night, fell to the canvas, Vader turned to the last remaining body in the ring.

He turned to The Undertaker.

"Watching tapes of the match, you could see a physical transformation taking place in both men," Speigel pointed out. "Vader was in 'the zone'—the place pro athletes describe as where fastballs slow down and baskets get larger. Every punch had the weight of his entire body behind it. Every movement was choreographed for maximum punishment.

"Undertaker was going through a similar change. But he wasn't quite there yet. And that's usually the difference in sports."

Undertaker tried to kick Vader in the groin, but Vader was too quick. He caught Undertaker's foot and twisted him down to the canvas. To Vader, there wasn't a person beneath him; there was no recognition of the other man's potential to battle back. He smashed Undertaker with a barrage of fists and then, as had been his practice during the

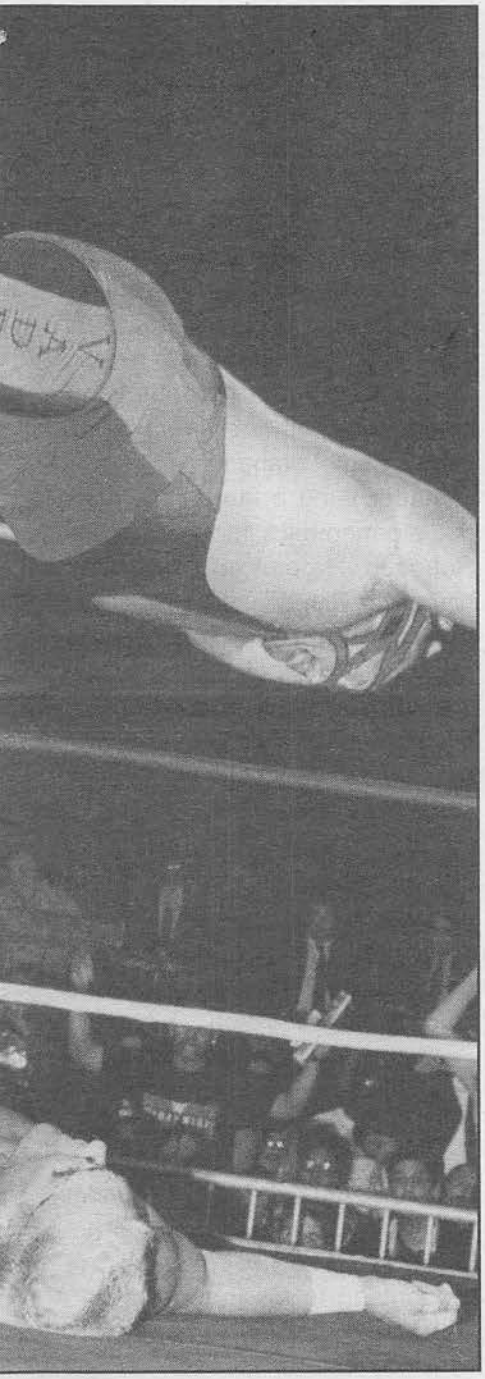


"roadkill" tour, got up and slowly left the ring.

He left behind quite a mess.

UNDERTAKER'S RESURRECTION

Undertaker is many things, but a talker he is not. He does not give good interviews. Scary maybe, but not particularly intelligent. Paul Bearer does most of his talking for him. During the ensuing two weeks, however, he appeared—sans hat—on every televised wrestling show he could find, babbling like an auctioneer in a high-pitched whine that seemed to rise from his stomach and come out his ears.



Vader's splashes and all the brutal punishment he metes out often put wrestlers like Sting in the hospital. His sudden attack on Undertaker merely served as a wakeup call.

More disconcerting was his appearance. Vader's fistic legacy broke Undertaker's nose, dislocated his jaw, and dozens of stitches would have been required to close cuts to his pale face. Undertaker, though, refused all medical attention. He allowed his nose to heal crookedly, his jaw to hang slack. Though he lost nearly a pint of blood, he allowed the cuts to congeal and scar in a pattern that resembled the traffic grid of downtown Chicago.

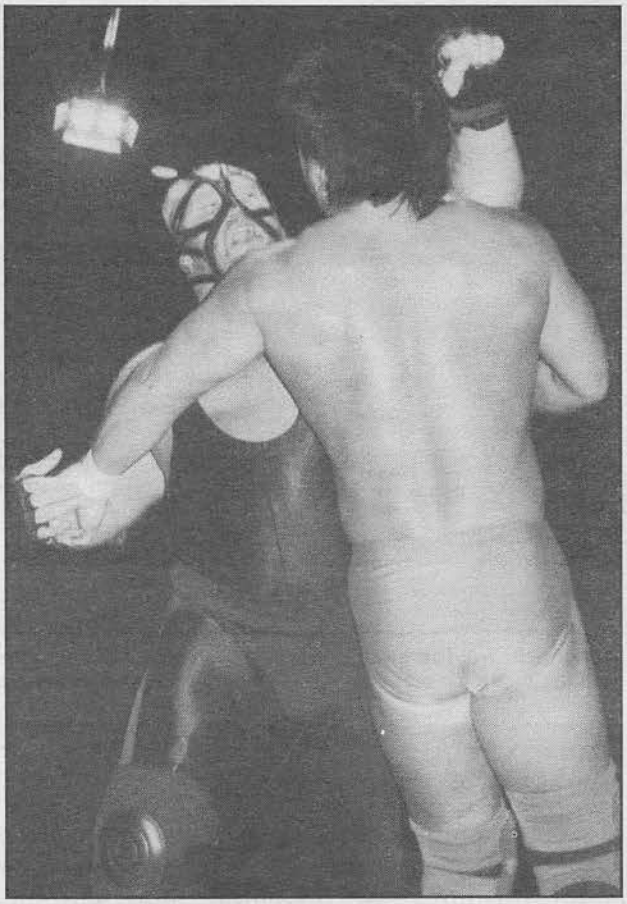
"I want to thank Big Van Vader for waking me up," he squealed. "I was half a man before I met him. I'm left with beautiful reminders of his visit."

Undertaker ripped off a scab, allowing fresh blood to pour from his forehead. He smeared the blood on his face, licking his lips.

"Each day is a call to renewal," he continued. "I wish to visit with Big Van Vader again. We have much to discuss. He and I can be good friends. I want to kill him. I want to love him. I want to taste his flesh and drink his blood."

For Dr. Speigel and her staff, Undertaker's bizarre pronouncements were cause for tremendous excitement.

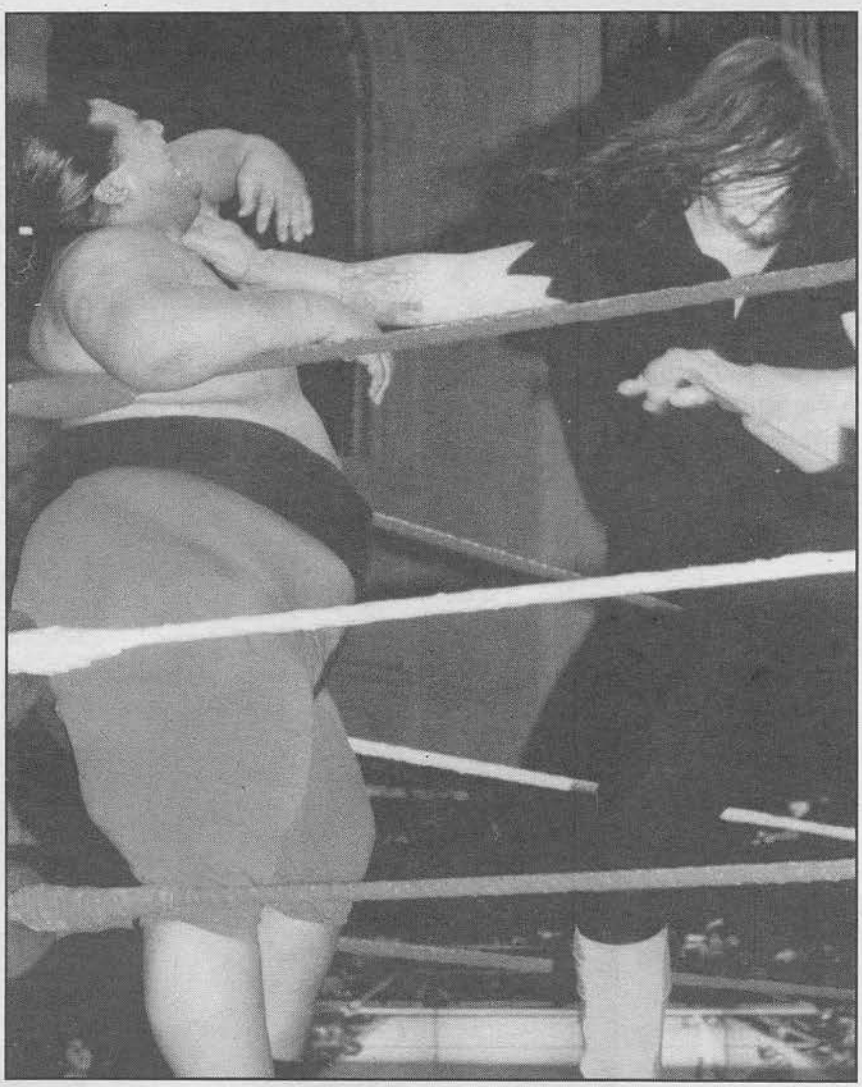
"He is moving into the zone where all great athletes explore the dimensions of their talent," she said. "By conventional standards, he's deranged. But this is the mindset necessary for him to reach his potential. Vader did him a great service. And only Vader can bring him to the mountain."



Any wrestler who has been hit by Vader's left forearm knows just how hard it is. As far as we know, though, no one has just stood there smiling as Vader flailed away.

VADER ACCEPTS

"He wants me, he got me," Vader said without fanfare. "I'll beat him up so bad that this time, I'll make him pretty."



Undertaker tried to slap a chokehold on Vader the way he did to Yokozuna, but nothing he tried did any serious damage. Both men, it seemed, were in "the zone."

MATCH TIME

Smoky Mountain promoters were beside themselves with their good fortune. Two ex-world champions were going to wrestle a showdown contest in their territory. "It's too good to be true!" one cried. "This match has everyone talking!"

It was true. This match was unlike any big contest anyone could remember. There was no true fan favorite. The behavior of both wrestlers was becoming increasingly bizarre. Two days before the match, Vader performed another run-in, this one in a match between Hulk Hogan and Ric Flair.

"You would have thought Hogan and Flair were preliminary wrestlers the way Vader wiped the mat with them," is how one reporter described the carnage left behind.

When asked if that was intended as a message to Undertaker, Vader stonily replied, "I don't believe in sending messages!"

Undertaker, meanwhile, had added to his trove of facial disfigurement by piercing his nose and eyebrows. "Pain is my friend," he said. "I want to introduce my friend Vader to my friend pain."

"Both men are peaking, according to every graph we have," Dr. Speigel excitedly pointed out. "They are going into the match with all guns firing. It will be an explosion to end all explosions."

One writer compared the battle to the old King Kong vs. Godzilla movies, where the great monsters flung themselves at each other with vicious abandon and little regard for the buildings and bystanders around them.

After 45 seconds of action, three ringside spectators had to be rushed to the hospital, a result of Vader landing on them—that feat itself a result of Undertaker picking up the 450-pound wrestler and hurling him from the ring as if he were a bag of oranges.

Vader flung a fan off his back and stormed back into the ring like Robocop. He met an Undertaker haymaker with one of his own, and the resulting collision of fists sounded like an exploding bomb. The force of battle was magnified by the size of the bodies. If one didn't know better, one would think it was two lightweights going at it, the way Vader and Undertaker flew around the ring. In fact, Vader and Undertaker wrestled at a combined weight of 778 pounds, and with each coupling, the ring shook to its foundation.

At the four-minute mark, Dr. Speigel, hired to do commentary on the pay-per-view broadcast, noticed a flaw in Vader's attack. "He's thinking," she said. "You can see it by counting the rolls in his forehead. He's not reacting, not responding to his internal clock. Undertaker is. Undertaker is wrestling with confidence."

Undertaker was also wrestling with bravado and insanity. After Vader connected with a left

(Continued on page 68)

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March 1991

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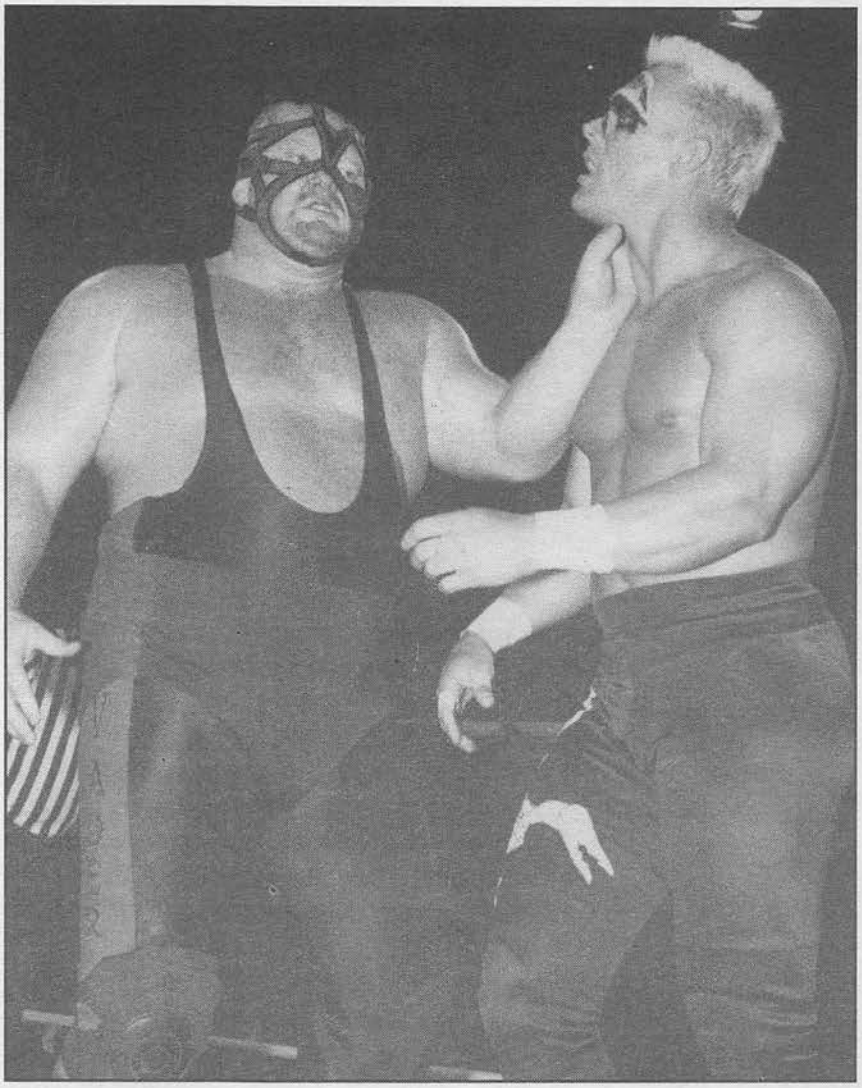
(Continued from page 66)

forearm that would have killed 97 percent of the world's population, Undertaker smiled, ripped the earring from his nose and offered it to Vader. Vader swiped the offering and fired it into the crowd (where it struck a fan, who required first-aid), but was clearly intimidated by Undertaker's indifference to pain. He lifted Undertaker, who offered no resistance, and power-bombed him. Undertaker got right up and stared at him. He lifted Vader and executed a crushing "tombstone" piledriver. Vader got up and laughed.

After 15 minutes, the battle lines had been clearly drawn: Both men were in surprisingly great physical condition, aerobically fit and capable of enduring immense amounts of intense pain. While Undertaker, true to Speigel's diagnosis, remained the more ferocious aggressor, Vader did not back down. It was a heavyweight bout in which both wrestlers were equally prepared.

"It's a match for the ages," said Speigel, truly awed. "I don't know how it's going to turn out."



Vader is so tough and intimidating that he doesn't think twice about grabbing an opponent by the throat and tossing him around. He just didn't expect Undertaker to have so much energy and endurance.

AS IT TURNED OUT ...

For 35 minutes, the battle was waged uninterrupted. There were no breaks, no pauses. The fans' eyes remained open in fascinated terror. Then, from the dressing room, a small parade of wrestlers suddenly moved toward the ring, in a slow, single-file march.

"Something is going on, I'm not sure what," said the announcer. "But 23 wrestlers have surrounded the ring and are staring at the bloody, battling bodies of Undertaker and Vader."

The wrestlers, led by Killer Kyle, handed a sheet of paper to the announcer, who read it to a nationwide TV audience. "We are the men who, over the past few months, have suffered and been humiliated at the hands of these two animals. We are here to teach them that he who lives by the sword, shall perish by the sword!"

By this time, Vader and Undertaker had stopped wrestling and were watching the small army below them. After the announcer finished reading, the group leaped onto the ring apron, surrounding Vader and Undertaker.

"How do *you* like being surprised, Vader?" Kyle asked as he, T.D. Steele, Marcus Bagwell, and The Parriot. Four more joined in, while the other 15 cornered, then attacked Undertaker.

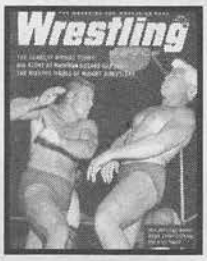
"Look at Undertaker," Speigel

(Continued on page 70)

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Wrestling historians, rejoice! Some of the back issues in this ad have not been offered for sale for more than a decade—but a recent transfer of warehouse inventory from New York to Pennsylvania uncovered a small supply of these classic publications! Obviously, supplies are extremely limited, so all magazines will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis only. Prices quoted are based on the rarity of the issue and the number of available copies. For speediest service, use VISA or MasterCard or make payment by money order or certified check. Please don't send cash! Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime chance to own a memorable piece of wrestling history! Once they're gone, they'll never be offered for sale again—so order today!

WRESTLING REVUE



Published between 1959 and 1964, *Wrestling Revue* is acknowledged as one of the finest series of wrestling magazines ever produced. These beautiful editions, all edited and published by Stanley Weston (founder of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated, The Wrestler,* and *Inside Wrestling,* among so many other titles) set a standard for all wrestling magazines that followed, and are available now for the first time in many years!

Fall 1961 Edouard Carpentier challenges Floyd Patterson, Bruiser vs. Cowboy Bob Ellis, The Zebra Kid, killer holds, action at The Kiel, Nick Bockwinkel vs. Dr. X, and full-color action of the Bastiens vs. Shires & Nelson. **$25**

December 1961 An extensive Buddy Rogers interview, Bobo Brazil, Fred Blassie, Pepper Gomez, the Torres brothers, Whipper Watson, "Sailor" Art Thomas, Ricki Starr, plus a full-color centerfold of Mark Lewin & Don Curtis. **$35**

February 1962 Dick Beyer, Mitsu Arakawa, Edouard Carpentier vs. Lou Thesz, Angelo Poffo, a five-girl battle royal, Don and Jackie Fargo, Billy Zabyszko, Larry Chene, plus a full-color centerfold of Guy & Joe Brunetti. **$30**

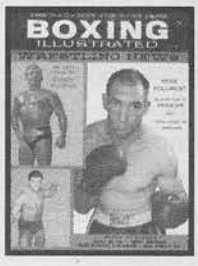
April 1962 Wilbur Snyder, Luis Martinez, Madison Square Garden closeup, Yulie Brynner, Billy Wolfe, Don Leo Jonathan vs. Pat O'Connor, closeup on midgets, plus a full-color centerfold of Bearcat Wright. **$30**

June 1962 Eddie Graham, Verne Gagne, wrestlers vs. boxers, Dory Dixon, Yukon Eric, Tony Lanza, Lorraine Johnson vs. Kay Noble, Skull Murphy & Brute Bernard, The Crusher, plus a full-color centerfold of Red Bastien. **$25**

December 1963 The Destroyer, "Maniac" Mark Lewin, Paul Diamond, Ernie Ladd, Judy Grable, Bill Watts, Pat O'Connor, Don Duffy, The Scufflin' Hillbillies, plus a full-color centerfold of Lou Thesz. **$35**

February 1964 Edouard Carpentier vs. Killer Kowalski, Florida wrestling, Mad Dog Vachon, Fabulous Moolah, Fritz Von Erich, Rene Goulet, Cyclops, plus a full-color centerfold of Bruno Sammartino. **$35**

BOXING ILLUSTRATED/ WRESTLING NEWS



In November 1958, Stanley Weston launched *Boxing Illustrated/Wrestling News,* an innovative concept in sports magazines. Each issue's content consisted of approximately 60 percent boxing and 40 percent wrestling, resulting in the most complete magazine for ring afficianados the world has ever known.

May 1959 ***Boxing:*** Ray Robinson, James Jeffries, Rube Vargas, Willie Pep, Joey Maxim, Denny Moyer. ***Wrestling:*** Gene Stanlee, Larry Hamilton, Happy Humphrey, "Cowboy" Bob Ellis. **$25**

June 1959 ***Boxing:*** Gene Fullmer, Jack Britton, Gustav Scholz, Mauro Vazquez, Rocky Graziano. ***Wrestling:*** Buddy Rogers, Don Leo Jonathan, Hard Boiled Haggerty, Omaya Kato. **$35**

September 1959 ***Boxing:*** Carmen Basilio, the perfect kayo, Tiger Flowers, Joe Brown, Paolo Rosi. ***Wrestling:*** Edouard Carpentier, Ricki Starr, Enrique Torres. **$25**

October 1962 ***Boxing:*** Special edition previewing the Floyd Patterson vs. Sonny Liston bout! ***Wrestling:*** "Handsome" Johnny Barend, Andre Drapp, "Sailor" Art Thomas, five pages of results. **$30**

October 1963 ***Boxing:*** Cassius Clay, Joe Lynch, Frankie Narvaez, Tommy Loughran. ***Wrestling:*** Crusher vs. Verne Gagne, Tony Manous, The Dirty Daltons, results. **$25**

February 1964 ***Boxing:*** Sonny Liston, Joey Archer, 1963 in review, Cassius Clay. ***Wrestling:*** Bruno Sammartino vs. Gorilla Monsoon, Emile Dupre, Bruiser vs. Bob Ellis, results. **$30**

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

WRESTLING REVUE

- ☐ Fall 1961
- ☐ December 1961
- ☐ February 1962
- ☐ April 1962
- ☐ June 1962
- ☐ December 1963
- ☐ February 1964

BOXING ILLUSTRATED/ WRESTLING NEWS

- ☐ May 1959
- ☐ June 1959
- ☐ September 1959
- ☐ October 1962
- ☐ October 1963
- ☐ February 1964

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(Continued from page 68)

pointed out, "He's smiling beneath the pile! He's enjoying it!"

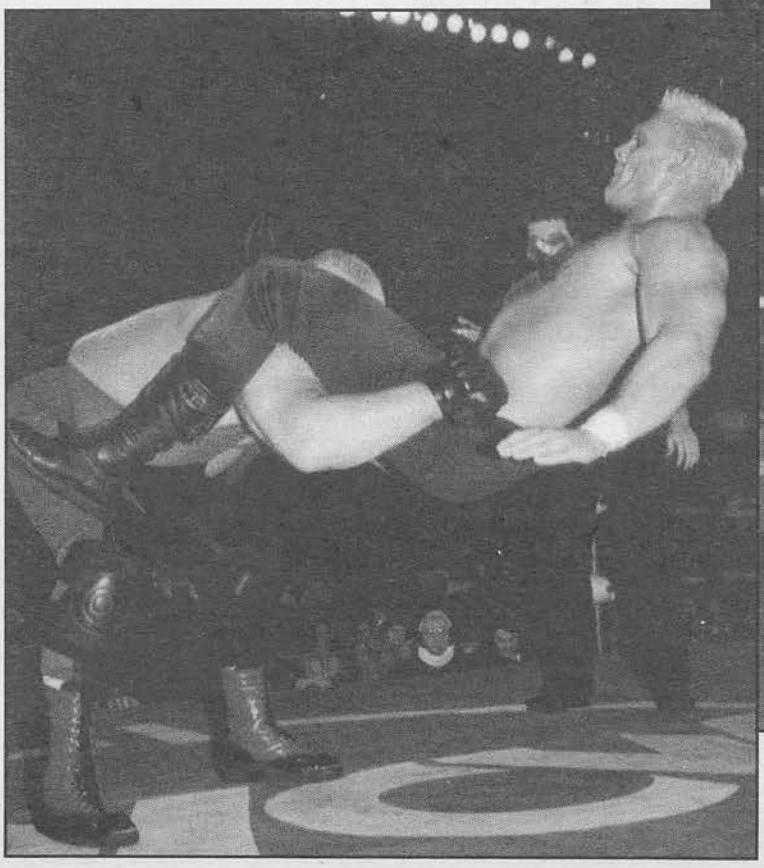
Vader, actually, was the first to rise; he regained his feet with seven men attached to his body (he resembled some sort of mythological creature) and proceeded to vanquish them all, two and three at a time. On the other side of the ring, Undertaker was doing the same to his wave of attackers. It should be pointed out that not all the men in the ring were mid-card or preliminary wrestlers. Buddy Landell was subdued by one swipe of Vader's hand; Brad Armstrong was crushed beneath an Undertaker boot. Twenty-three men entered the ring intent on crushing two men. After nine minutes, it was two men who stood among a ring littered with 18 staggering, bleeding, and unconscious bodies. The other five had limped their way back to the dressing room and fled the building in terror.

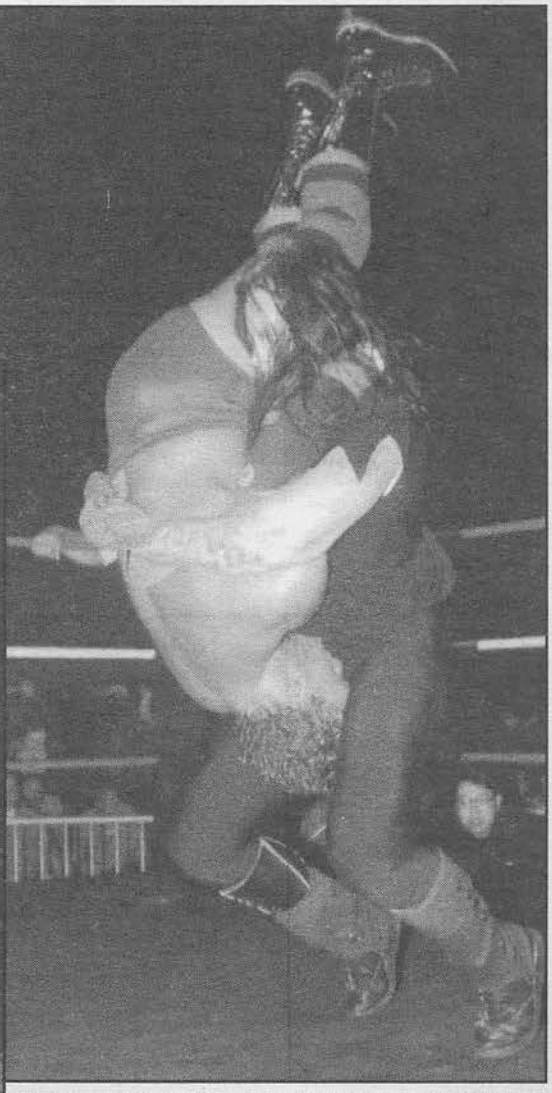
Undertaker looked at Vader. He smiled, the effort resembling a Picasso watercolor, and walked out of the ring. Vader waited a minute, kicked an awakening attacker back into unconsciousness, and then he, too, left the ring.

AFTERMATH

There was no definitive conclusion to the Harvard study. "Athletes rely on too many intangibles to stuff into a test tube," Speigel wrote in a paper she delivered to the New England Academy of Medicine. "In the end, it's better to sit back and watch, to marvel and applaud at their accomplishments."

As for Undertaker and Vader, well, they never wrestled each other again—or anyone else for that matter. After the match, no one would go within a quarter-mile of them. □





The match didn't end with either a Vader power bomb (left) *or* an Undertaker "tombstone" piledriver (above), although both men tried their signature moves. In fact, the match had a most unusual ending, even by "Dream Match" standards!

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(Continued from page 5)

DEFENSE OF HOGAN

I'm glad to see that one of Hulk Hogan's friends (Hacksaw Duggan) is finally speaking up in defense of the "Hulkster" ("You've Got Hulk Hogan All Wrong!" Fall 1995). Everyone is constantly jumping on the anti-Hogan bandwagon, and many of Hogan's friends seem to be afraid to come forward to defend their friend. Not even his own manager, Jimmy Hart, has done much to stop all the Hogan-bashing. Hacksaw Duggan finally took a stand as Hogan's friend and spoke out in support of him. At least Hogan now knows that he has one friend who isn't afraid to stand by his side in his feud with Kevin Sullivan's evil crew. Now I'd like to see just how many other so-called "friends" of Hogan would do the same for him.

MARC OLMSTEAD
Windsor, Ontario

SMOKE SIGNALS

Who cares if the so-called big-time promoters won't give The Sandman the time of day because of his smoking habit ("Why Sandman's Career Could Go Up In Smoke!" Summer 1995). Sandman's constant smoking isn't just part of a habit, it's his lifestyle. It is his way of saying that the special interest groups are going too far when they try to ban things like smoking and excessive violence.

The Sandman always has Woman light a cigarette for him before he walks to the ring. Reader Mark Waiksnoris wishes people would stop criticizing the ECW champ for smoking so much.

Sandman is the heavyweight champion of a highly competitive wrestling federation. Just because he smokes like a chimney doesn't mean that he shouldn't be considered by the major promotions. It's not like he's committing a mortal sin. Sandman must be a pretty good athlete if he is able to hold on to the ECW title despite the fact that he is almost constantly polluting his own lungs with smoke.

MARK WAIKSNORIS
Wilkes-Barre, PA

QUESTIONABLE LOVE

What is up with Sister Sherri Martel? Why is she chasing after an old fogy like Col. Robert Parker when she has within her grasp two sexy young guys like Harlem Heat's Booker T and Stevie Ray? I just can't understand it. It's not like the Colonel could offer her anything she doesn't already have. She is a successful, independently wealthy woman who doesn't need to rely on any man for anything. What on Earth does she see in him?

Sherri needs to wake up and realize what she is doing. She could very well lose her managerial position with Harlem Heat and possibly her managerial career in WCW if she continues to obsess over Parker and make a fool of herself. I don't think any guy would be worth that.

DEBBIE DONORA
Austin, TX □

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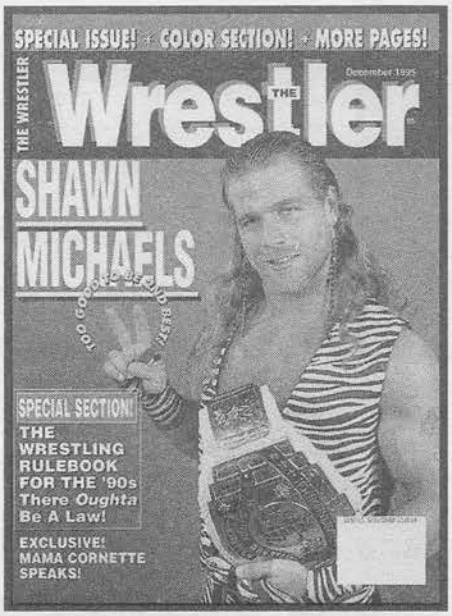
THIS MONTH IN...

The Wrestler

SPECIAL ISSUE!

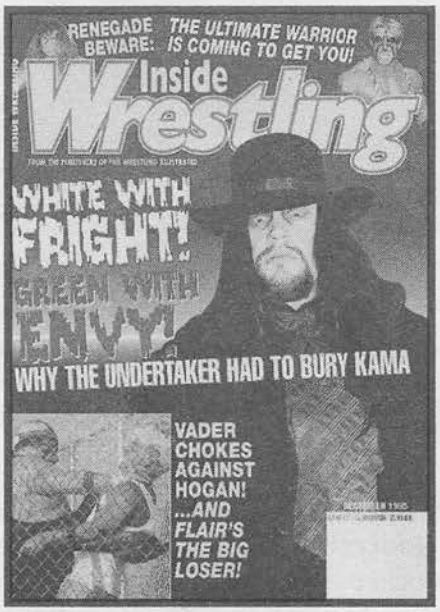


SHAWN MICHAELS looks great as Intercontinental champ. How long will he settle for second best? ... Everyone always talks about "the rulebook" in wrestling. If it such a book exists, it's probably outdated. We've come up with our own rulebook that every promoter should use ... In an exclusive interview, **MAMA CORNETTE** talks about cutting her son out of her will! ... Discover why **HACKSAW DUGGAN** was snubbed by WCW fan favorites after Bash at the Beach!

All this—and much more!—in the December 1995 issue of ***The Wrestler***

NOW ON SALE

Inside Wrestling

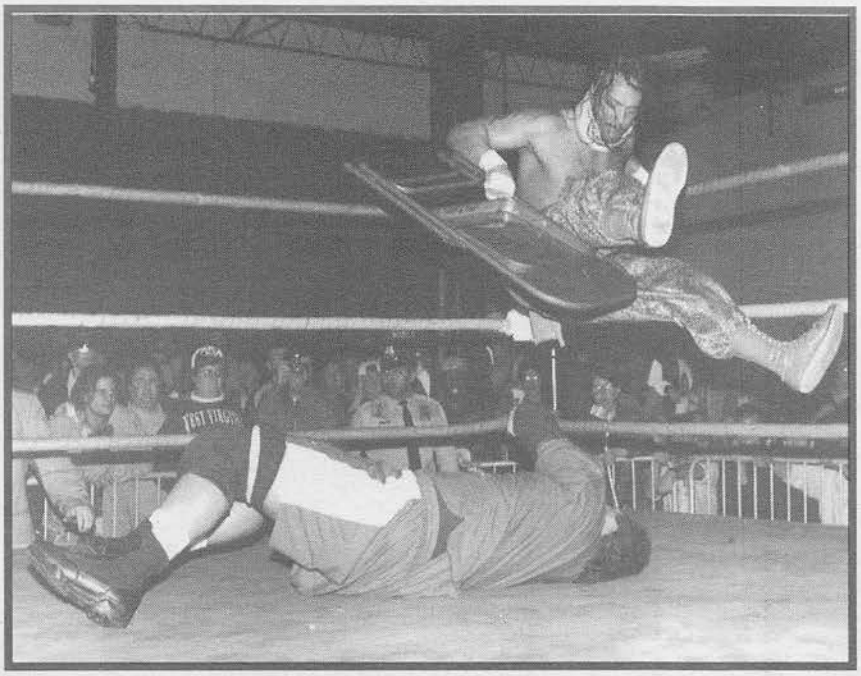


Yes, it did happen! **BIG VAN VADER** choked against **HULK HOGAN** at Bash at the Beach. Now **RIC FLAIR** is going to have to pay for it! ... **THE UNDERTAKER** is burying **KAMA** every chance he gets. You'd never guess what might have happened if he hadn't ... **THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR** publicly professes to harbor no ill will toward **THE RENEGADE**. We think it's only a matter of time before he comes after him! ... Find out the inside story on the **GANGSTAS-PUBLIC ENEMY** turf war!

All this—and much more!—in the December 1995 issue of ***Inside Wrestling***

NOW ON SALE

(Continued from page 6)



Sabu is through smashing people with chairs in ECW, but he might be trying it against WCW's best soon. He said he would love to be the man who destroys "Hulkamania."

and that former ECW comrades **Dean Malenko**, **2 Cold Scorpio**, **Eddy Guerrero**, and **Chris Benoit** would be joining him in the federation, had a lot of WCW mainstays in shock.

"I've seen Sabu on tape a lot and in Japan," said **Sting**, "but having him here in WCW is gonna be great. I can't believe he signed. He's the kind of wrestler who makes everybody he goes up against better. You never know what kind of move he's going to hit you with, or from what angle. He could invent a new move in the middle of a match. He can be just as dangerous as someone like **Big Van Vader**. That said, though, I still think I could beat him!"

Sabu was reportedly reluctant to join either the WWF or WCW because he feared his reckless style would not be welcomed in the land of "family entertainment." His handlers also told promoters that Sabu expected to be offered title shots fairly early in his WCW tenure.

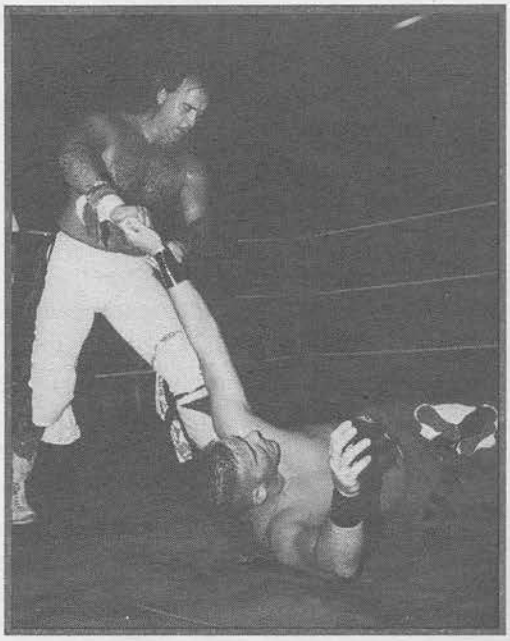
It's hard not to at least think about what might happen in a Sabu-**Hulk Hogan** match. The "Hulkster's" usual power attack and his clothesline-big foot-legdrop combination might not be nearly enough to finish off a man who once wrestled only a few weeks after Benoit broke his neck ... a man who thinks nothing of moonsaulting onto a wooden press table a half-dozen or so times just for the thrill of seeing it break.

"I would welcome the chance to be the man to finally end 'Hulkamania,'" Sabu said through an interpreter. "I respect what the man has accomplished, but he has never wrestled anyone like me! I could teach him new meanings for the word pain!"

* * *

Big shakeups are happening in Smoky Mountain Wrestling on what seems like a daily basis. **Buddy Landell** fired manager Jim Cornette after tiring of watching him interfere in almost all of his matches. The last straw came in Johnson City, Tennessee, in August, when Cornette's interference backfired and **Brad Armstrong** pinned Landell to capture the held-up SMW heavyweight title.

"I'll take on Cornette and his whole **Militia** at once if I have to," Landell said. "The guy isn't happy if he isn't the star of the show 100 percent of the time. He thinks I needed him to win all my matches. He never gave me a chance to show what I could do on my own.



Robert Gibson has been a man without a regular tag team partner lately. With Ricky Morton apparently gone from SMW for good, The Rock 'n' Roll Express could be permanently disbanded.

That was a big mistake, Cornette!"

The other big news involves **Robert Gibson** and his desperate search for a new tag team partner. Gibson's long-time partner and friend **Ricky Morton** was fired by SMW in August, but it's still not clear exactly why. SMW officials say it's because he failed to show for several scheduled matches; Morton says it's because his girlfriend is involved in a lawsuit with the girlfriend of SMW star **Tracey Smothers**. He told WRESTLING SUPERSTARS that Smoky Mountain wanted him to persuade his girlfriend to drop the lawsuit, and when he refused, he was fired. He also said he wouldn't mind reuniting with Gibson someday, but never in SMW.

Gibson has tried teaming with **Bobby Blaze**, **Brad Armstrong**, and several others, but hasn't yet found who he is looking for. He talked with **Marty Jannetty**, who appeared on an SMW card this summer, but Jannetty told him he's trying to accomplish more on his own right now.

Finally, some incredible news from Japan. One one IWA card in Kawasaki that was witnessed by nearly 30,000 people, **Cactus Jack** defeated **Terry Funk**. No, it wasn't your ordinary match. It was a no-rope, barbed-wire dynamite board time bomb death match! Earlier on the card, Funk beat **Leatherface** in a barbed-wire chain death match and **Tiger Jeet Singh** in a barbed-wire board glass match, while Jack beat **Terry Gordy** in a barbed-wire baseball bat match and **Shoji Nakamaki** in a barbed-wire nail death match. Just another day at the matches! □

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SPRING/84 **Section:** 10 Stars' Secret Fears; **Color Action Gallery:** Tommy Rich.

FALL/84 **Section:** Stars Answer Personal Questions; **Color Action Gallery:** Andre The Giant.

WINTER/84 **Section:** Wrestling's Seciest Superstar; **Color Action Gallery:** Billy Jack Haynes.

SPRING/85 **Section:** 10 Most Hated Men; **Color Action Gallery:** Roddy Piper.

SUMMER/85 **Section:** Greatest Finishing Maneuvers; **Color Action Gallery:** Kerry Von Erich.

FALL/86 **Section:** Top 20 Stars; **Color Action Gallery:** Bruiser Brody.

SUMMER/87 **Section:** Greatest Cage Matches; **Dream Match:** Battle Royal; **Color Action Gallery:** Cage Match Fury!

FALL/87 **Section:** Men Wrestlers Fear Most; **Dream Match:** Hawk & Animal vs. Zenk & Martel; **Color Action Gallery:** Rick Steamboat.

WINTER/87 **Section:** Top 20 Tag Teams; **Dream Match:** Luger vs. Savage; **Color Action Gallery:** Great American Bash.

SPRING/88 **Section:** Don't Trust These Men! **Dream Match:** Sammartino vs. Hogan; **Color Action Gallery:** Randy Savage.

WINTER/88 **Section:** Wrestling's Sexiest Superstar; **Dream Match:** Flair vs. Savage; **Color Action Gallery:** Rick Rude.

FALL/89 **Section:** Men To Dominate The '90s; **Dream Match:** Hogan & Steamboat vs. Savage & Flair; **Color Action Gallery:** Ultimate Warrior.

WINTER/89 **Section:** Top 20 Tag Teams; **Dream Match:** Elizabeth vs. Sherri; **Color Action Gallery:** Tully & Arn.

SUMMER/90 **Section:** Greatest Finishing Maneuvers; **Dream Match:** Hogan vs. Luger; **Color Action Gallery:** Hulk Hogan.

AUGUST/90 **Section:** Don't Trust These Men! **Dream Match:** Ultimate Warrior vs. Flair; **Color Action Gallery:** Norman.

OCTOBER/90 **Section:** 50 Strongest Wrestlers; **Dream Match:** Tag Team Extravaganza; **Color Action Gallery:** Steve Williams.

DECEMBER/90 **Section:** Wrestling's Sexiest Superstar; **Dream Match:** Hennig vs. Rude; **Color Action Gallery:** Missy Hyatt.

FEBRUARY/91 **Section:** Wrestling's Next Champions; **Dream Match:** Sting vs. Luger; **Color Action Gallery:** Legion Of Doom.

APRIL/91 **Section:** 10 Teams We'd Like To See; **Dream Match:** Hogan vs. Ultimate Warrior; **Color Action Gallery:** Sid Vicious.

JUNE/91 **Section:** Wrestling's Best; **Dream Match:** Strongest Man Competition; **Color Action Gallery:** Ric Flair.

AUGUST/91 **Section:** Top 20 Stars; **Dream Match:** Legion Of Doom vs. Steiners; **Color Action Gallery:** Curt Hennig.

OCTOBER/91 **Section:** Ban These Men! **Dream Match:** Andre vs. Gigante; **Color Action Gallery:** Undertaker.

DECEMBER/91 **Section:** Top 20 Tag Teams; **Dream Match:** Battle Royal Of Champions; **Color Action Gallery:** Steiners.

FEBRUARY/92 **Section:** Wrestlers To Make '92 Sizzle; **Dream Match:** Bret Hart vs. Sting; **Color Action Gallery:** Cactus Jack.

APRIL/92 **Section:** Little-Known Facts; **Dream Match:** Hogan vs. Justice; **Color Action Gallery:** Johnny B. Badd.

AUGUST/92 **Section:** Greatest WrestleMania Matches; **Dream Match:** Kamala vs. Abdullah; Steiners, Sting-Cactus.

SEPTEMBER/92 **Section:** Most Complete Wrestlers; **Dream Match:** IRS vs. Windham; Shango, Owen, Steamboat vs. Rude.

OCTOBER/92 **Section:** Overrated/Underrated; **Dream Match:** Michaels vs. Jannetty; Money Inc., Olympic wrestlers.

DECEMBER/92 **Section:** 21st Century Stars; **Dream Match:** R. Steiner & Williams vs. S. Steiner & Gordy; Money Inc., Jarrett.

JANUARY/93 **Section:** Wrestling's Best Arenas; **Dream Match:** Halloween Horror; Undertaker-Flair, Steamboat.

MARCH/93 **Section:** Hot '93 Wrestlers; **Dream Match:** Hart vs. Simmons; Steamboat-Pillman, Tyson to wrestle.

APRIL/93 **Section:** Tag Team We'd Like To See; **Dream Match:** Dusty & Dustin vs. Bill & Erik Watts; Badd, Vader.

JUNE/93 **Section:** Wrestling's Best; **Dream Match:** Vader vs. Yokozuna; Missy & Flair, Windham, Cactus & Orndorff.

AUGUST/93 **Section:** Top 20 Stars; **Dream Match:** Rude vs. Madusa; Duggan, Gilbert, Watts, Wippleman.

OCTOBER/93 **Section:** These Men Must Be Banned! **Dream Match:** Hogan & Beefcake vs. Sting & Davey Boy; Michaels, Rhodes.

DECEMBER/93 **Section:** Top 20 Tag Teams; **Dream Match:** Lex Luger's challenge; Michaels, Hawk, Adams, Eaton & Benoit.

SPRING/94 **Section:** 10 Stars To Make '94 Sizzle; **Dream Match:** Cactus vs. Doink; Sting, Steiners, Sabu.

SUMMER/94 **Section:** 10 Stars Who Are An Embarrassment; **Dream Match:** Bret vs. Sting; Hogan, Dustin, Vader & Race.

FALL/94 **Section:** 10 Fan Favorites You Should Be Ashamed To Cheer; **Dream Match:** Vader & Bigelow vs. Yokozuna & Earthquake.

WINTER/94 **Section:** Turnbuckle Turkey Awards! **Dream Match:** Hogan vs. Hart vs. Vader; Lawler, Flair, Douglas.

☐ SPRING/84	☐ WINTER/87	☐ DECEMBER/90	☐ APRIL/92	☐ JUNE/93
☐ FALL/84	☐ SPRING/88	☐ FEBRUARY/91	☐ AUGUST/92	☐ AUGUST/93
☐ WINTER/84	☐ WINTER/88	☐ APRIL/91	☐ SEPTEMBER/92	☐ OCTOBER/93
☐ SPRING/85	☐ FALL/89	☐ JUNE/91	☐ OCTOBER/92	☐ DECEMBER/93
☐ SUMMER/85	☐ WINTER/89	☐ AUGUST/91	☐ DECEMBER/92	☐ SPRING/94
☐ FALL/86	☐ SUMMER/90	☐ OCTOBER/91	☐ JANUARY/93	☐ SUMMER/94
☐ SUMMER/87	☐ AUGUST/90	☐ DECEMBER/91	☐ MARCH/93	☐ FALL/94
☐ FALL/87	☐ OCTOBER/90	☐ FEBRUARY/92	☐ APRIL/93	☐ WINTER/94

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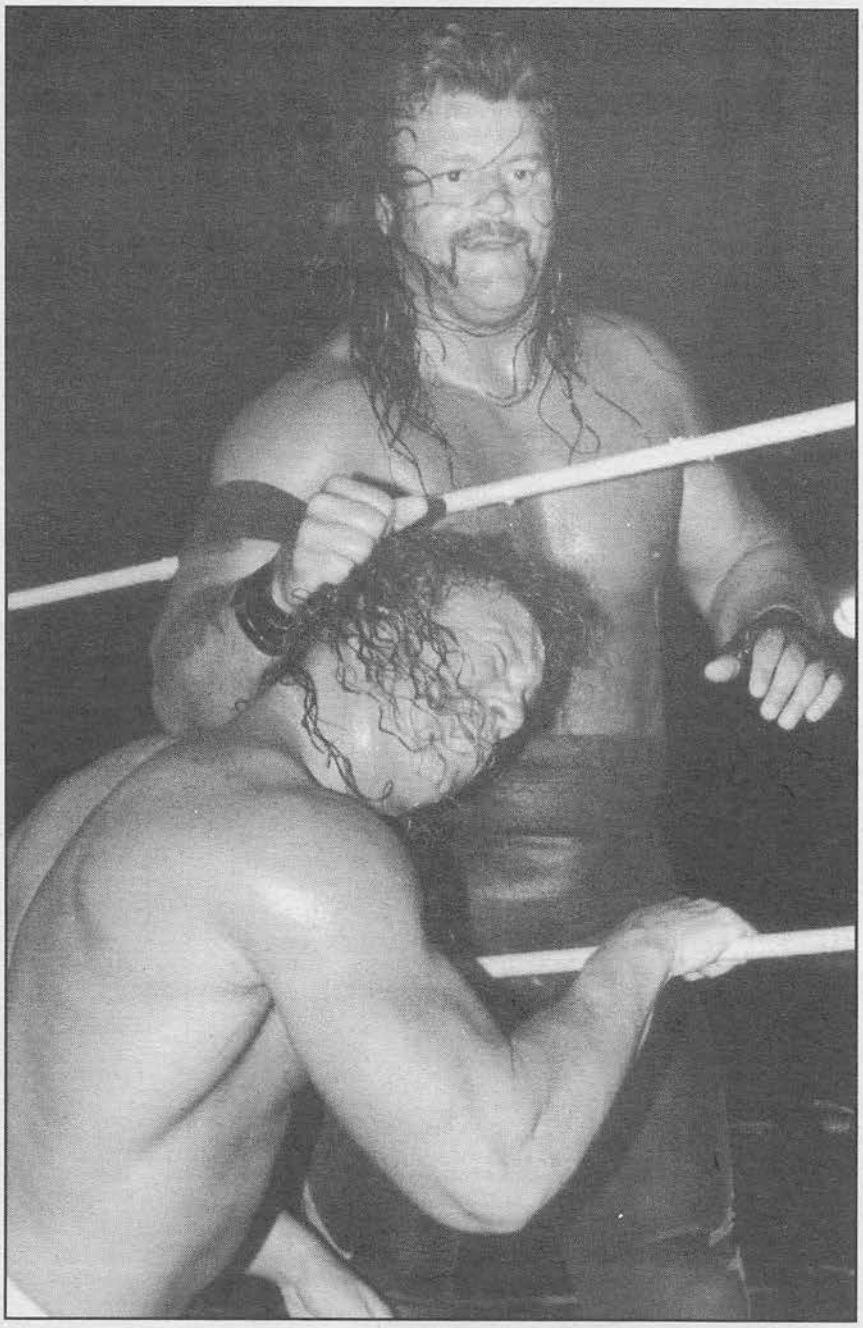
(Continued from page 41)



You'd think the entire Armstrong family would be loved throughout Tennessee and the South. Not Brad. He was cheered when he beat USWA Southern champ Billy Jack Haynes in Knoxville, but booed when he faced him in Memphis.

"Maybe I shouldn't have said anything, but it's just the way I felt," Hales said. "I'm an honest man. I was disappointed in the quality of competition SMW offered my men. We signed a contract and wasted our time."

Sensing that the job of defending SMW's honor was made for a referee or official, not a wrestler, SMW referee Mark Curtis was dispatched to Memphis to respond to Hales' comments. There, he belittled USWA fans and helped The Rock 'n' Rolls in matches against PG-13.

In one incident that pretty much says it all about this feud, Curtis, Gibson, and Rick Morton brutalized Hales with the spur from Curtis' cowboy boot after the Rock 'n' Rolls lost to PG-13. Hales lost so much blood that he had to be rushed to a nearby hospital, where emergency treatment was administered. And that escalated the feud. Before long, everybody in both federations was involved. Wrestler who are rivals in SMW have joined forces to battle others in the USWA, and vice versa.

"This isn't like the AFC vs. the NFC, it's not like the National League vs. the American League, it's not like the North vs. the South, it's unlike anything you've ever seen before," Hales said. "This is a war with no end in sight."

Hales has wrestled Curtis in both federations. Curtis has also wrestled USWA referee Bill Rush and teamed with manager Jim Cornette against Hales and Frank Morell in "kiss-my-foot" matches. That's strange, because Cornette and Curtis have never gotten along in SMW.

"Can you believe that a referee agreed to team with Cornette?" said a long-time observer of the sport. "That's like the fox teaming with the hens. Most amazing thing I've ever seen. It goes to show you how a cause, no matter how ridiculous it might be, brings people together. In all honesty, I think they've all lost their minds."

That might have been the truest statement of all. Until New York City battles Buffalo, or San Francisco meets Los Angeles, Tennessee's civil war is a one-of-a-kind brouhaha that defies all logic. It's positively insane. □

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KNOW YOUR HOLDS

Every issue, WRESTLING SUPERSTARS will examine a different hold or maneuver, analyzing its effectiveness in the best way possible–by allowing the wrestler who uses it to explain it in his own words. These are potentially dangerous and crippling moves and should be left to the pro rings: Don't try these at home!

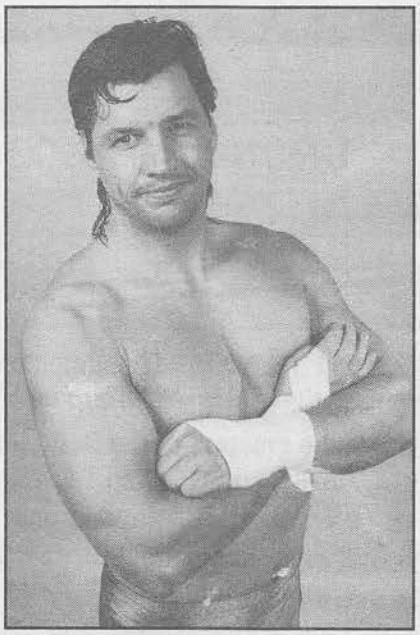
THE SHOULDER-TOSS TAKEDOWN

By Al Snow

IF YOU WANT to know how to execute *any* hold properly, you've come to the right man. And I do mean any hold. I've forgotten more holds than most so-called great wrestlers know today. Have you seen Marty Jannetty lately? That has-been hasn't been the same since I taught him a wrestling lesson this summer and took away his precious Midwest Territorial heavyweight belt.

Maybe I should offer him a job cleaning my house or something. That's about his speed.

Enough kidding around. You're reading this because you want to learn, so pay attention.



What I'm going to teach you about today is a move I call the shoulder-toss takedown. It should be fairly simple for any wrestler who has been around a while, but you'd be surprised at how many wrestlers there are out there who just don't have a clue. They should pay me to teach them how to wrestle.

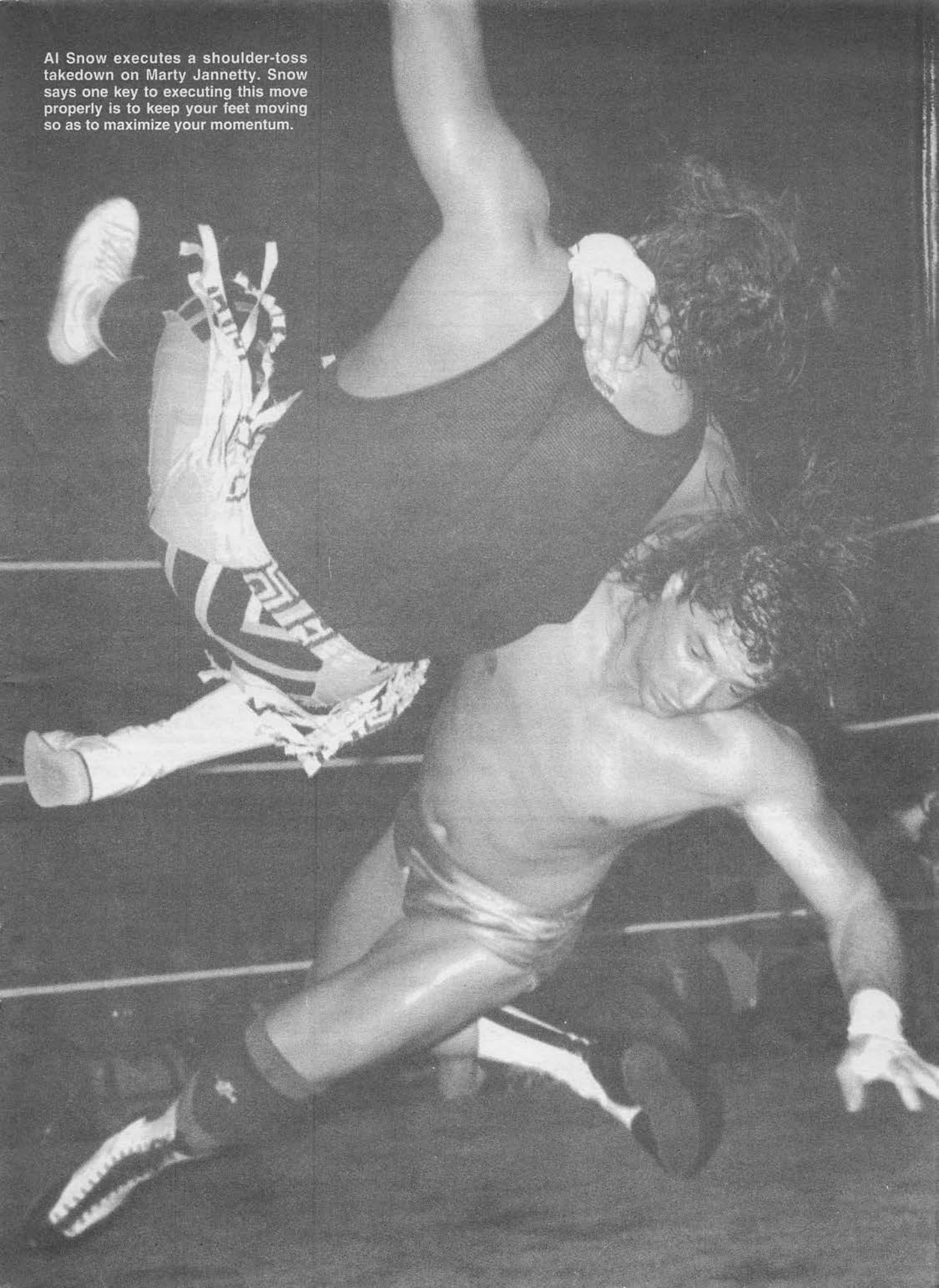
The shoulder-toss takedown is something that can really take a guy by surprise, and it can be a great defensive or offensive move.

If an opponent thinks he has you in a bad way, he'll more than likely come charging at you. If you're as quick as I am, you can step slightly to the side, keep your center of gravity low, and reach across his body. Then you have to reach around the far side of his neck and hook your hand around his shoulder. Then, in one fluid motion, you lift the man high off his feet and hurl his body into the mat, with you coming down on top of him.

If you've seen me execute this move, you'll know it looks kind of like a choke-slam, but better.

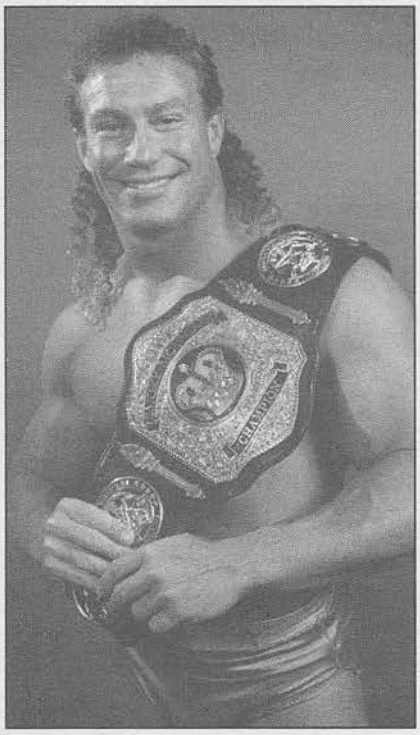
Another key to executing this move perfectly—and I *always* execute it perfectly!—is the footwork. You must move your feet the way a pitcher does when he winds up to fire a fastball. Use your feet to drive your body forward and make the most of your momentum. If you don't have your legs churning and moving forward, your opponent can easily reverse the move and land on top of you. Trust me, you don't want that to happen.

I'll tell you this: The shoulder-toss takedown can be a great move. Too bad there aren't many guys out there who are smart enough or talented enough to get it done right.



Al Snow executes a shoulder-toss takedown on Marty Jannetty. Snow says one key to executing this move properly is to keep your feet moving so as to maximize your momentum.

WRESTLING SUPERSTARS®



Brad Armstrong

TOP 10

1. **DIESEL**
   356, Las Vegas, NV
   (-) WWF World champion
2. **HULK HOGAN**
   275, Venice Beach, CA
   (5) WCW World champion
3. **SHAWN MICHAELS**
   234, San Antonio, TX
   (3) WWF Intercontinental champion
4. **STING**
   260, Venice Beach, CA
   (1) U.S. heavyweight champion
5. **BRET HART**
   234, Calgary, Alberta
   (2) No. 3 contender: WWF World title
6. **RAZOR RAMON**
   287, Miami, FL
   (8) No. 2 contender: WWF World title
7. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   237, Sarasota, FL
   (7) No. 4 contender: WCW World title
8. **THE UNDERTAKER**
   328, parts unknown
   (-) No. 4 contender: WWF World title
9. **RIC FLAIR**
   243, Minneapolis, MN
   (4) No. 3 contender: WCW World title
10. **BRAD ARMSTRONG**
    226, Marietta, GA
    (-) Smoky Mountain champion

TAG TEAMS

1. **OWEN HART & YOKOZUNA**
   Combined weight: 795 pounds
   (2) WWF World tag team champions
2. **HARLEM HEAT**
   Combined weight: 550 pounds
   (8) No. 3 contenders: WCW World tag title
3. **THE SMOKIN' GUNNS**
   Combined weight: 465 pounds
   (-) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title
4. **THE NASTY BOYS**
   Combined weight: 585 pounds
   (1) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title
5. **PG-13**
   Combined weight: 471 pounds
   (10) USWA tag team champions
6. **THE HEAVENLY BODIES**
   Combined weight: 450 pounds
   (-) Smoky Mountain tag team champions
7. **BUNKHOUSE BUCK & DICK SLATER**
   Combined weight: 464 pounds
   (-) WCW World tag team champions
8. **RAVEN & STEVE RICHARDS**
   Combined weight: 451 pounds
   (-) ECW tag team champions
9. **BOBBY EATON & LORD STEVEN REGAL**
   Combined weight: 480 pounds
   (4) No. 2 contenders: WCW World tag title
10. **MARCUS BAGWELL & SCOTT STUDD**
    Combined weight: 464 pounds
    (-) No. 4 contenders: WCW World tag title

WCW

World Champion:

HULK HOGAN
(C) 275, Venice Beach, CA

1—**STING**
(1) 260, Venice Beach, CA
2—**LEX LUGER**
(-) 265, Chicago, IL
3—**RIC FLAIR**
(2) 243, Minneapolis, MN
4—**RANDY SAVAGE**
(5) 237, Sarasota, FL
5—**BIG VAN VADER**
(8) 450, Denver, CO
6—**THE RENEGADE**
(3) 256, parts unknown
7—**BUBBA ROGERS**
(-) 310, Cobb County, GA
8—**ARN ANDERSON**
(7) 249, Minneapolis, MN
9—**BRIAN PILLMAN**
(10) 226, Cincinnati, OH
10—**DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE**
(-) 260, Tampa, FL

WWF

World Champion:

DIESEL
(C) 356, Las Vegas, NV

1—**SHAWN MICHAELS**
(3) 234, San Antonio, TX
2—**RAZOR RAMON**
(4) 287, Miami, FL
3—**BRET HART**
(2) 234, Calgary, Alberta
4—**THE UNDERTAKER**
(8) 328, parts unknown
5—**MABEL**
(-) 503, Harlem, NY
6—**DAVEY BOY SMITH**
(-) 245, Leeds, England
7—**JEAN-PIERRE LAFITTE**
(-) 255, Montreal, Quebec
8—**HENRY GODWINN**
(-) 278, Biggers, AR
9—**HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY**
(-) 279, Greenwich, CT
10—**HAKUSHI**
(-) 231, Tokyo, Japan

USWA

USWA Champion:

JERRY LAWLER
(C) 234, Memphis, TN

1—**BILLY JACK HAYNES**
(4) 242, Portland, OR
2—**BRIAN CHRISTOPHER**
(1) 230, Memphis, TN
3—**BRIAN ARMSTRONG**
(-) 240, Marietta, GA
4—**BILL DUNDEE**
(7) 219, Melbourne, Australia
5—**TRACEY SMOTHERS**
(-) 227, Atlanta, GA
6—**BRIAN LEE**
(8) 251, Los Angeles, CA
7—**DOUG GILBERT**
(3) 241, Lexington, TN
8—**STEVEN DUNN**
(-) 240, Tampa, FL
9—**AXL ROTTEN**
(-) 302, Philadelphia, PA
10—**GORGEOUS GEORGE III**
(6) 221, Charlotte, NC

ECW

ECW Champion:

THE SANDMAN
(C) 244, Philadelphia, PA

1—**2 COLD SCORPIO**
(8) 222, Denver, CO
2—**TOMMY DREAMER**
(5) 245, Yonkers, NY
3—**CACTUS JACK**
(1) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM
4—**TASMANIAC**
(3) 221, Tasmania
5—**MIKEY WHIPWRECK**
(10) 187, New York, NY
6—**HACK MYERS**
(-) 250, Baltimore, MD
7—**911**
(4) 310, parts unknown
8—**RAVEN**
(-) 235, Short Hills, NJ
9—**LUNA VACHON**
(-) 148, Montreal, Quebec
10—**EDDY GUERRERO**
(2) 231, Los Angeles, CA

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

For period ended September 7, 1995

MOST POPULAR

1. **SHAWN MICHAELS**
   234, San Antonio, TX
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular
2. **LEX LUGER**
   265, Chicago, IL
   Last issue: No. 10 Most Popular
3. **STING**
   260, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular
4. **HULK HOGAN**
   275, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular
5. **DIESEL**
   356, Las Vegas, NV
   Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular
6. **BRET HART**
   234, Calgary, Alberta
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular
7. **RAZOR RAMON**
   287, Miami, FL
   Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular
8. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   237, Sarasota, FL
   Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular
9. **BIG VAN VADER**
   450, Denver, CO
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated
10. **THE UNDERTAKER**
    328, parts unknown
    Last issue: No. 5 Most Popular

MOST HATED

1. **DAVEY BOY SMITH**
   245, Leeds, England
   Last issue: unrated
2. **RIC FLAIR**
   243, Minneapolis, MN
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated
3. **MABEL**
   503, Harlem, NY
   Last issue: unrated
4. **KEVIN SULLIVAN**
   252, Boston, MA
   Last issue: unrated
5. **SID VICIOUS**
   318, West Memphis, AR
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated
6. **JERRY LAWLER**
   234, Memphis, TN
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated
7. **SKIP**
   226, Carteret, NJ
   Last issue: unrated
8. **DEAN DOUGLAS**
   223, Pittsburgh, PA
   Last issue: unrated
9. **DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE**
   260, Tampa, FL
   Last issue: unrated
10. **JEAN-PIERRE LAFITTE**
    255, Montreal, Quebec
    Last issue: unrated

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of these issues in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only, and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a first-place rating, nine for second place, and so on. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, with a possible maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—BRET HART.....72 points
2—BIG VAN VADER.....48 points
3—RIC FLAIR.....46 points
4—STING.....45 points
5—HULK HOGAN.....43 points

TAG TEAMS

1—THE NASTY BOYS.....74 points
2—THE HEADSHRINKERS.....35 points
3—RICK & SCOTT STEINER.....35 points
4—HARLEM HEAT.....32 points
5—THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS.....27 points

SMOKY MOUNTAIN

Smoky Mountain Champion:
BRAD ARMSTRONG
(C) 226, Marietta, GA

1—BUDDY LANDELL
(C) 236, Los Angeles, CA
2—TERRY GORDY
(7) 289, Chattanooga, TN
3—BOO BRADLEY
(2) 310, parts unknown
4—TOMMY RICH
(-) 248, Hendersonville, TN
5—PUNISHER
(-) 260, parts unknown
6—TONY ANTHONY
(3) 235, Bucksnort, TN
7—TRACEY SMOTHERS
(4) 227, Atlanta, GA
8—ROBERT GIBSON
(-) 225, Pensacola, FL
9—AL SNOW
(8) 232, Lima, OH
10—BOBBY BLAZE
(5) 222, Charlotte, NC

INTERNATIONAL

Triple Crown Champion:
MITSUHARU MISAWA
(C) 247, Saitama, Japan

1—TOSHIAKI KAWADA
(5) 245, Tizhigi, Japan
2—THE GREAT MUTA
(4) 245, Tokyo, Japan
3—KOJI KANEMOTO
(-) 258, Tokyo, Japan
4—REY MYSTERIO JR.
(-) 140, San Diego, CA
5—PERRO AGUAYO
(6) 215, Zacatecas, Mexico
6—ANTONIO INOKI
(2) 240, Tokyo, Japan
7—SABU
(3) 220, Bombay
8—HIROSHI HASE
(8) 225, Tokyo, Japan
9—STAN HANSEN
(1) 322, Borger, TX
10—GARY ALBRIGHT
(10) 340, Billings, MT

AAA: AAA Champion—Perro Aguayo; **1**—Octagon; **2**—Konnan; **3**—Cien Caras; **4**—Rey Mysterio Jr.; **5**—El Hijo Del Santo; **6**—Psicosis; **7**—Winners; **8**—La Parka; **9**—Blue Panther; **10**—Miguel Perez Jr..

ACWACW Champion—T. Rantula; **1**—Rick Martel; **2**—Tito Santana; **3**—Glenn Osbourne; **4**—Johnny Gunn; **5**—Tommy Dreamer; **6**—Cactus Jack; **7**—Johnny Graham; **8**—Lord Zoltan; **9**—Tasmaniac; **10**—Ron Simmons.

IWCCW: IWCCW Champion—Greg Valentine; **1**—Joe Savoldi; **2**—Scott Putski; **3**—Tito Santana; **4**—Rick Martel; **5**—Tony Atlas; **6**—Johnny Gunn; **7**—Osamu Nishimura; **8**—Metal Maniac; **9**—Bastion Booger; **10**—Koko B. Ware.

MTW: MTW Champion—Al Snow; **1**—Marty Jannetty; **2**—Bruiser Bedlam; **3**—Ray Roberts; **4**—Sean Casey; **5**—Chris Carter; **6**—Dan Severn; **7**—Bastion Booger; **8**—Rock Stevens; **9**—J.T. Lightning; **10**—Bobo Brazil Jr..

PWA: PWA Champion—The Hater; **1**—Storm Trooper Willie; **2**—Nailz; **3**—Charlie Norris; **4**—Wahoo McDaniel; **5**—Jesse Hennig; **6**—Punisher; **7**—Horace the Psychopath; **8**—Blacktop Bully; **9**—Randy Gusto; **10**—Dan Jesser.

PWF: PWF Champion—Star Ryder; **1**—Italian Stallion; **2**—Russian Assassin II; **3**—Southern Rocker; **4**—George South; **5**—Madd Maxxine; **6**—Tyrone Knox; **7**—Flaming Youth; **8**—Terry Austin; **9**—Austin Steele; **10**—Cruel Connection II.

WWA: WWA Champion—Chris Evans; **1**—Jim McPherson; **2**—Ed Atlas; **3**—Frank Finnegan; **4**—John Rotten; **5**—Jimmy Snuka; **6**—Metal Maniac; **7**—Stryker; **8**—Gino Caruso; **9**—Gus the Greek; **10**—Akita Kaos.

WWWA: WWWA Champion—Brutus Beefcake; **1**—Rick Martel; **2**—Glenn Osbourne; **3**—Bobby Piper; **4**—Jim Neidhart; **5**—Harley Lewis; **6**—Mr. Motion; **7**—Derrick Domaino; **8**—The Zombie; **9**—Jack Hammer; **10**—Mad Russian.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

This column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 20 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important–and respected–ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans!

Back from the dead?! All in all, 1995 has not been the best of years for **The Heavenly Bodies**. For the first half of the year, it seemed like they couldn't buy a meaningful victory in the WWF. They struggled mightily against lower level duos like **The Bushwhackers** and **Tekno Team 2000**. Even when they returned to Smoky Mountain Wrestling early this year, where they had once had an incredible feud with **The Rock 'n' Roll Express**, they struggled in a few matches against **The Gangstas**. They gave **Mustafa Saed** and **New Jack** a rough time of it, but had a hard time defeating them.

The Heavenly Bodies

This was all happening less than two years after **Jimmy Del Ray** and **Tom Prichard** took then-WWF World tag team champions **Rick** and **Scott Steiner**—one of the best tag teams in history—to the limit in a thrilling match at SummerSlam '93 and in numerous rematches.

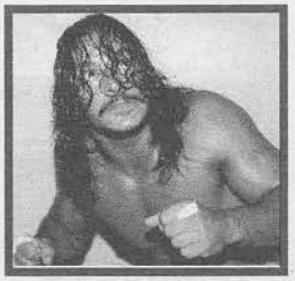
The Bodies' long slump came to an end in late-July, when they defeated **Assault and Battery—"Maniac" Jimmy Deo** and **Maxx Crimson**—for the Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling tag team title. Okay, so it wasn't the WWF or WCW tag title, and the Bodies lost the PCW belts back to Deo and Crimson a day later, but that victory might have been just what they needed to boost their confidence.

Less than two weeks later, Del Ray and Prichard were both Smoky Mountain *and* USWA tag team champions at the same time. They defeated **Tony Anthony** and **Tracey Smothers** for the SMW belts on August 4 and beat **PG-13** for the USWA straps three nights later.

We'll see if these victories will boost the Bodies' WWF career (we hear they're putting pressure on manager **Jim Cornette** to get them a WWF World tag title shot against **Owen Hart** and **Yokozuna**, another team he manages), but for now, they have to be considered one of the best 10 teams in the world. And we're glad to have them back in our tag team ratings. We just wish they'd try wrestling as full-time fan favorites for a while. We think they could do just fine without breaking rules and feel the fans would quickly warm up to them because of their incredible athletic ability.

Vader update. We didn't think he could do it, either. We thought **Big Van Vader** was making a big mistake by challenging **Arn Anderson** and **Ric Flair**. We also couldn't believe he rescued **Hulk Hogan** from an attack by all the members of **Kevin Sullivan's Dungeon of Doom** and formed an alliance with the "Hulkster." We certainly didn't think the fans would be so quick to back him. But if you watched Clash of the Champions XXXI, you know that even though Vader isn't ready to call himself a converted fan favorite, the people are squarely on his side. So for the first time in the history of this magazine, Vader has made the Most Popular list.

It looks like "Double-A" could be following him soon. Most fans seem to be on his side as the feud between him and Flair quickly heats up.



Sabu

It finally happened! Wasn't it just a matter of time before **Sabu** *finally* signed with either the WWF or WCW. Just before we went to press, we heard from one of his handlers that the maniac from Bombay, India, had agreed to give wrestling in WCW a try. He was tentatively scheduled to wrestle **Alex Wright** on a September 11 WCW card and was to make a decision about a possible lengthy stay in WCW shortly after that.

We think he could beat a lot of the top stars in WCW right now, and we think he'd fit in very well there. If he does stay, look for him to move up in the ratings very fast. He wrestled as well as ever, according to most observers, during a recent stint in Japan and has been a regular in our International rankings, as you probably know.

Until next issue ... If you have any comments or questions relating to any of the issues we've raised here or anything pertaining to our ratings in general, we'd like to hear from you. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o WRESTLING SUPERSTARS, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034.

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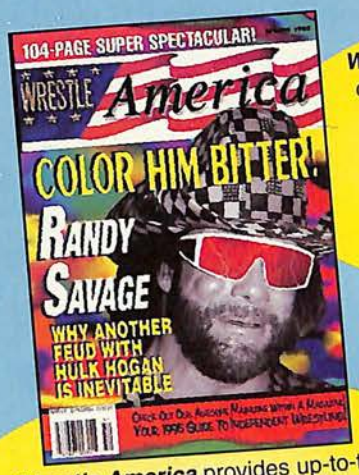

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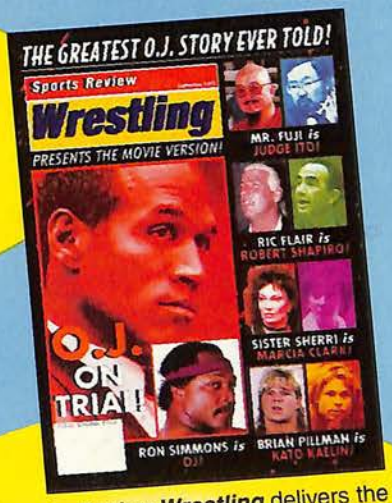

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